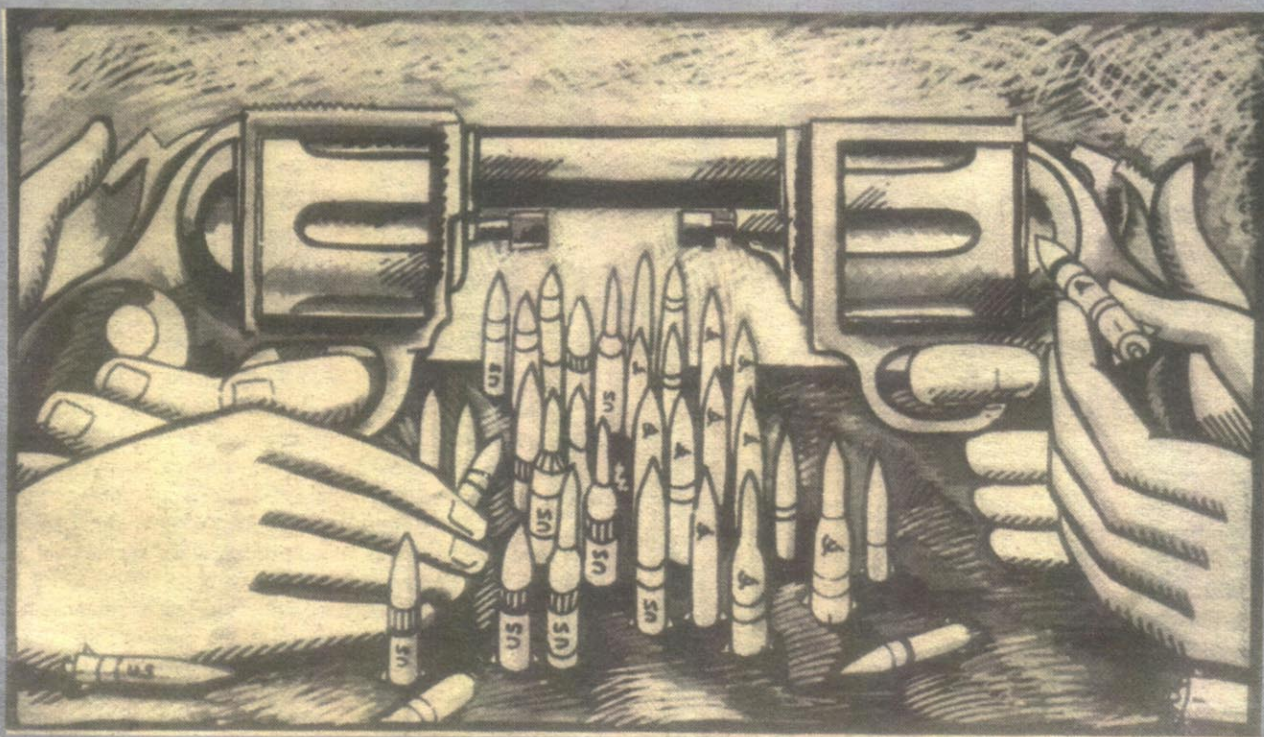


## The Summit of '85



Robert Neubecker/INX

### Star Wars or Arms Control?

Page 8



Black intellectual ferment

3

AFL-CIO: life at 30

5

Embattled Marcos

10

Nicaragua's emergency

11

Worldnet

12

Reaganism and beyond

16

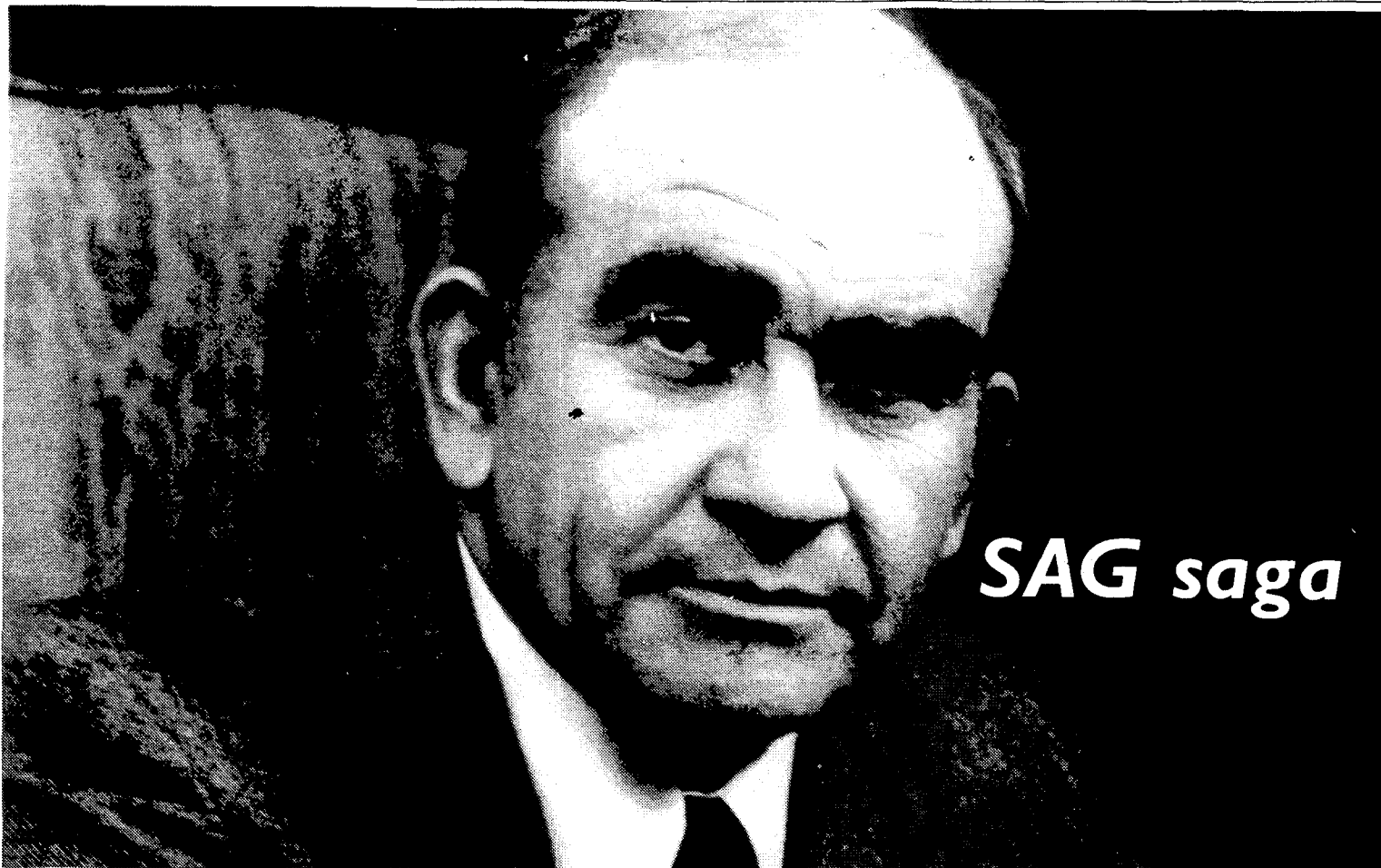
Recent fiction

18

Guerrilla Girls

20





Photographer unknown

By Joan Walsh

It was supposed to be epochal: the election to choose Ed Asner's successor as president of the embattled Screen Actors Guild (SAG). But the victory of Asner-endorsed Patty Duke over Asner critic Ed Nelson on November 5 probably has as much to do with Duke's wider name recognition as the popularity of her liberal politics with the union's 58,000 members.

Nevertheless, Duke's victory represents a setback for Actors Working for an Actors Guild (AWAG), the right-wing group that coalesced around Charlton Heston four years ago to oppose SAG's perceived leftward drift under Asner's leadership. But AWAG scored gains of its own in the balloting. It knocked off two incumbent vice presidents, Norma Connelly and Joe Ruskin, both union stalwarts and dedicated Asner allies. And it picked up three more Hollywood board seats, bringing its total to 12 of 99.

"It's not as large a victory as I'd like," commented Asner. "We lost two very good people on the executive level—and they'll probably crow about that—but we elected some good new people to the board."

For an election once billed as a contest for SAG's soul, the race turned out to be quieter than past campaigns. That's probably because most of AWAG's vitriol had traditionally been directed at Asner, who kept a low profile in this bout. In past elections—and in between them—AWAG had stridently attacked Asner's politics and the Guild's purported involvement in left-wing causes, taking no pains to distinguish between Asner the individual and Asner SAG president.

Heston's group got lots of mileage out of Asner's 1982 appearance in Washington, D.C., to present the pro-guerrilla Medical Aid to El Salvador with a \$25,000 check, ignoring his public assertion that the endorsement was his, not SAG's. AWAG mailings later linked Asner's Central America activism to SAG's decision to award \$5,000 to striking PATCO workers in 1981 and its refusal to grant Ronald Reagan a special Guild award that same year, finding a grand design of left-wing propaganda behind all the events.

Yet AWAG's ideological cover has been its insistence that SAG's and Asner's liberalism was not the issue. The problem was the guild's involvement in questions that had no bearing on the lives and working conditions of actors. It made violent opposition to the twice-proposed

opportunities for actors—only 5,000 of the Guild's members have acting jobs at any given time—he favored considering a pay freeze and lowering the Guild's minimum wage to create an "under-five-lines" pay scale. And he backed a greater role for actors who are also producers, so-called "hyphenates" who are currently prohibited from holding union office because of their management activities.

For a would-be union leader, those were some strange, concessionary proposals. But they went to the heart of the choice SAG members faced. Is SAG a union, as its leaders and members have traditionally believed? Or is SAG more comparable to a medieval guild for craftspeople and artists, one that avoids confrontation with management and involvement with the wider labor movement? Nelson ducked the controversial question of whether SAG should cut its ties to the AFL-CIO, a central AWAG proposal, saying only that the Guild should consider such a move.

But Mark McIntire, AWAG's fiercest ideologue, thought Nelson's proposals for giving actor-producers Guild leadership roles was a first step toward breaking with the AFL-CIO, which forbids such management meddling. "Take Clint Eastwood—he's one of the largest employers of actors and we can't have his input. The Asnerites denigrate him like he has the plague, or AIDS." Under Asner, McIntire says, SAG has wasted time "talking about apartheid or worrying if something is a positive portrayal of a Chinese person—issues that have nothing to do with improving business."

Yet under Asner's leadership SAG negotiated increases in all of its contracts four years in a row, without the threat of a strike. Even McIntire acknowledges that, indirectly, by noting that AWAG favors keeping Joe Ruskin head of its Wages and Working Conditions Committee, though he lost the vice presidency to AWAG candidate Christopher Mitchum. (Responded Ruskin: "Isn't that nice. Well, he better not hold his breath—he'll turn blue from top to bottom before I'd take that on [under AWAG leadership]. They wouldn't have the guts to go after anything.")

AWAG didn't completely eschew its characteristic personal attacks. McIntire denounces Duke's supporters as "Reagan haters, Heston haters and neosocialists." AWAG chair Morgan Paull called Duke "Ed Asner in skirts" in a *Los Angeles Times* story. And their most current ideological crusade was against SAG's endorsement of next year's Great Peace March, supported by notable Hollywood liberals, which Nelson criticized for "voicing anti-American slogans, such as 'Down with Star Wars.'"

AWAG's electoral gains can be minimized by the "celebrity factor" that mutes Duke's mandate. Connelly and Ruskin were always considered SAG's most endangered candidates in this election, since Windsor and Mitchum are more widely known. But they're also two of the union's most articulate spokespeople. Their loss, along with publicist Kim Fellner's departure to work for the National Writers Union, has to change SAG's public face.

Duke is a liberal, a staunch union backer known for her support of peace issues. Yet some people on both sides of the conflict expect her to steer a more cautious course for SAG: certainly liberal, certainly socially concerned, certainly part of the wider labor movement—but perhaps a step back from the frontlines where Asner led the group.

Ruskin doesn't foresee dramatic changes. "We never were the wild, hairy group they painted us as," he notes. But that doesn't mean the AWAG assault didn't take its toll. "We were never just dealing with the Guild. This was about Ed Asner. If he was allowed to do his job well, he would have become a point around which Hollywood liberals could have coalesced. And Charlton Heston is a good friend of the president, who knew Ed could make his work a lot harder. It never made sense that this small group would get so much attention."

Responds Asner: "I tend to agree. I think the Guild was used as a bellwether for the nation in both labor policy and its general political pronouncements. The fact that the president came from the union made it more important how we regarded him. When we didn't praise him, it was an enormous rebuff and they focused an unusual excess of attention on us."

But though Asner's efforts got him smeared in the media and probably cost him *Lou Grant*, no one would ever call him a victim. "We were never knocked down and I think that gave heart to a lot of people who wished to resist. I think we were a beacon—a small beacon."

# THE STORY INSIDE

merger with the Screen Extras Guild central to its attacks on SAG leadership, and benefited from hostility to the idea among many members. Just after the last SAG vote against merger, AWAG candidates swept 11 of 12 Hollywood Board seats.

This year, with Asner out of the picture, AWAG's campaign mailing muted the red-baiting that had distinguished its earlier communiques. It put forth its candidates for SAG office as a "unity" slate that would heal the wounds of the Asner era. Nelson, the AWAG-endorsed "independent," ran on a 21-point program to deal with actors' concerns, from doing away with top-of-the-show pay scales and casting systems that favor stars over unknowns to cracking down on the use of foreign actors in this country.

SAG leaders criticized Nelson's lack of formal plans for achieving his objectives. "We've been fighting for many of those goals for four administrations," says SAG Vice President Norma Connelly, who lost to AWAG activist Marie Windsor. "It's like running for president and saying you'll end world hunger. The question is how."

But where Nelson spelled out how he'd achieve his goals, SAG stalwarts were alarmed at his answers. To increase employment

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GUILD

## IN THESE TIMES

### IN THESE TIMES

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By Salim Muwakkil

**A**FTER NEARLY TWO DECADES OF quiescence, the black intellectual community is again in ferment. The civil rights agenda, an approach still utilized and cherished by most black leaders, is being questioned with increasing frequency by an energetic and persuasive group of black intellectuals.

In the '60s, the last period of black intellectual fervor, the civil rights establishment was also a popular target. Both the right and left wings of the Black Power movement—the Black Muslims to the Black Panthers—focused some of their most derisive language on the strategies of civil rights leaders.

Many black intellectuals of that period considered civil rights quaintly irrelevant. Instead, great importance was attached to whether one was a revolutionary nationalist or a cultural nationalist. *Black Scholar* and the defunct *Black World*, the two most influential black intellectual journals of that era, filled page upon page with arguments over these arcane designations. But once the hyperbole eased and the emotionalism cooled, there wasn't much left to sustain intellectual curiosity.

The current spurt of activity among black intellectuals is, in part, a reaction to that period's excesses and naivete. Although the issues are being examined in a much more systematic and disciplined social context than in the '60s, the civil rights agenda remains the main bone of contention.

This consistent move away from civil rights is part of a historical dialectic among black Americans. Civil rights are stressed in times of racial optimism. But blacks focus on internal development and economic self-reliance when the general society becomes less hospitable. Statistics indicate that conditions have seldom been less hospitable for the masses of black people than they are these days.

Ironically, the spark that ignited this current intellectual glow came primarily from a small core of blacks who find much in common with Reagan. Although this group has no more than a dozen prominent members, they are prolific writers and their influence has grown way out of proportion to their numbers. Included are people like Thomas Sowell of the Hoover Institution, Glenn Loury of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, Walter Williams of George Mason University, Robert Woodson of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise and Joe Perkins, an editorial writer for the *Wall Street Journal*.

Like the president, they loathe the welfare state and charge that the black poor have suffered because of it. They are against affirmative action and school busing for desegregation. Their foreign policy is strongly anti-Communist and, by and large, they support the Reagan doctrine of counterrevolution. Advocates of free-market capitalism and entrepreneurial values, these black scholars place much of the blame for black economic stagnation on inappropriate cultural patterns in the black community.

### Neo-conservative blacks

Loury, who is one of the more visible members of this coterie, has no objection to be called neoconservative. In fact, he says there is a "structural similarity" between his development and that of the New York Jewish intellectuals who form the core of the neo-conservative movement. "I'm a former liberal who grew disenchanted with the failures of liberal social policy and the hypocrisies of liberal foreign policy."

What may be most remarkable about the emergence of this well-publicized group is that they offer nothing new. Their economic program merely updates the classical "invisible hand" mysticism of Adam Smith. And for values they prescribe nothing more imaginative than the venerable Protestant ethic. Their novelty lies in the fact that they are offering a well-articulated—and well-funded—challenge to the liberal-left



Manning Marable of Colgate University challenges the black neocons' legitimacy.

## New issues reviving dormant arguments

hegemony among black intellectuals when the left is particularly vulnerable. The inability of the welfare state to stem the enormous rise of the black underclass or halt social dislocations associated with that seething population, has greatly increased these black neocons' credibility.

Some black analysts regard this new group simply as a bunch of opportunists who have been flushed out by the conservative tide. "There's nothing new or different happening with these black conservatives," says Manning Marable, a professor of political sociology at Colgate University and a self-proclaimed Marxist. "And it is certainly far from becoming established as any kind of intellectual trend. What we have is merely the fruit of a lot of right-wing foundation money." Marable argues that institutions like the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute and the Hoover Institution cultivated a corps of opportunistic black intellectuals to trot out whenever they needed black support for their agenda. He contends that they represent no one but themselves.

"This tiny group doesn't even speak for black businessmen, the people who would normally be their natural constituency," Marable notes. "Most black businessmen in this country would be classified as social democrats in any other country. Because they realize that in order for black entrepreneurs to get an even shake, there has to be government intervention at some level." Arguments based on abstract notions of a free market are too divorced from reality to be taken seriously, Marable says.

But others who disagree with black neocons think it would be a mistake to trivialize them. "They're significant and they're formidable," says Martin Kilson, a professor of government at Harvard. "What's more, they mark an important crossroads in the life cycle of the Afro-American intelligentsia."

Kilson, who labels himself a progressive socialist, argues that this small cluster of black neoconservatives developed as a reaction to the "escape-hatch paradigms" that were fostered during the '60s and early '70s. "They are filling a vacuum left by the visceral excesses of the crackpot nationalists," he says. In Kilson's reading of history, the black nationalist affectations—the utopian rhetoric, the cathartic

emotionalism, the racial and sexual chauvinism—of the recent past were diversions, lacking in seriousness and rigor. He welcomes these conscientious, scholarly neocons as a spur to compel more rigor from those arguing on the other end of the political spectrum.

### Faulty categories

Black neocons are not the only ones questioning the efficacy of civil rights methodology. A group of left-leaning scholars are also gaining a wider audience for their work and prominent among them is William J. Wilson, chairman of the University of Chicago's sociology department and author of many works, including the widely read but deceptively titled book *The Declining Significance of Race*.

Wilson is often mislabeled a neocon. "Whenever anyone shows a spark of independent thinking, there's this great rush to categorize," he says bitterly. "The press wants to lump me in with the neoconservatives just because I don't fit their mold of what a liberal is supposed to be. I'm actually close to a democratic socialist, but the popular media are not very sophisticated when it comes to understanding the complexities of these issues."

Wilson might have added that when it comes to issues affecting black people, the popular media seem to prefer presenting caricatures rather than examining subtleties. In a recent piece in *Newsweek* magazine, the neocon label was affixed to an ideologically-diverse group of black thinkers merely because all of them are discussing the black community's social pathologies. They are breaking what the magazine says is a code of silence "in which such things as black crime and inferior black academic performance were either peremptorily blamed on white racism or not mentioned at all."

*Newsweek* writer Peter McGrath apparently believes that any black analyst who is willing to place some of the blame for the problems of black America on blacks themselves is a neoconservative. That black thinkers from across the political spectrum agree they must take more responsibility for their own development and become more self-reliant is a fact readers of *Newsweek* would have a hard time discerning.

The left has also been guilty of simplification. Attempts to focus on cultural problems peculiar to blacks are often treated with suspicion. Sometimes these attempts are denounced as reactionary. Some left analysts argue that since black people have been victimized by a racist system, they should expect, and accept, sociopathic behavior in their communities. Perhaps they don't realize that this argument reduces blacks to simple stimulus-response organisms with no independent internal dynamic.

But Wilson agrees with the neocons in seeing traditional black leadership as helping to perpetuate the image of blacks as hapless victims, thus delaying action against sociopathic patterns taking root in many urban black communities.

"The liberal perspective on the ghetto underclass has become less persuasive and convincing," says Wilson, "principally because many of those who represent traditional liberal views on social issues have been reluctant to discuss openly or, in some instances, even acknowledge the sharp increase in social pathologies in ghetto communities."

For fear of fueling racist arguments and not wanting to "blame the victim," liberal civil rights advocates opened the way for the emergence of the neocons and a more radical variant, Louis Farrakhan. But Wilson and others like Kilson, Harvard's Orlando Patterson and Yale sociologist Adolph Reed forthrightly address the problems of ghetto pathologies and recommend remedies that stress black self-reliance in addition to central government planning.

Wilson sees the growing black underclass as society's most pressing problem, but contends it could be ameliorated significantly through an aggressive public policy and a reallocation of resources. While

*Continued on page 6*

## Black leaders out of touch?

One of neoconservatives'—black or white—most persistent criticisms of old-line black leadership is that it does not reflect the views of the black community.

"The black community is basically, within a couple of generations, a Southern population and contains a good deal of support for conservative ideas, especially on abortion and crime and even in international affairs," says Glenn Loury of Harvard. But, he adds, national black leadership seldom reflects these feelings.

A recent attempt to quantify that dichotomy was made by Linda Lichter of the Center for Media and Public Affairs, and published in the American Enterprise Institute publication *Public Opinion*.

The poll purported to discover huge differences between the views of average black people and their leaders. For example, the poll reportedly found that while 66 percent of the black rank and file thought black people were making progress only 39 percent of the leaders agreed.

But the survey has been mercilessly criticized for its faulty polling methods and has been almost universally discredited. The survey questions were found to be tendentious and poorly worded. Whatever Lichter discovered about the differences between blacks and their leaders (and there are surely some differences) has since been dismissed.

The poll has also been criticized as racist. For example, at the end of the survey Lichter asks the question: "Do you think it's appropriate for leaders of black groups in the U.S. to play a role in U.S. foreign policy?"

Imagine the Gallup organization asking a similar question about leaders of white groups playing a role in foreign policy. The idea that it may be "inappropriate" for blacks to influence the governmental policy of the country in which they live is not far from the views of the Ku Klux Klan.

—S.M.



# INSHORT

Beth Maschinot

## Dover's can of worms

In September, Bristol, Conn., was preparing to hold the country's first non-binding referendum on whether to overturn the Supreme Court's 1973 decision legalizing abortion. Commentators began declaring that a pro-life victory in Catholic, working-class Bristol could begin a popular groundswell. And pro-choice leader Laura Minor's poll showed pro-choice forces down 5 percent.

But all that changed November 5. Bristol voted 44 to 56 percent to reject the call to overturn the *Roe vs. Wade* decision. "We honestly didn't know if we would win or lose," Minor said after the vote tally. "The Catholic Churches sermonized against us for weeks in a 69 percent Catholic town. The vote shows that people have their minds made up." For emphasis, she pointed to the conservative New Hampshire town of Dover and Derry, which followed Bristol's lead this fall and put the question on the ballot. There, too—even though pro-choice forces in Derry stopped campaigning two weeks before the election—the pro-life bid failed by a convincingly large margin.

## New York's deep-six

And in New York City, the most controversial referendum slotted for election day didn't even make it on the ballot. The year-long effort by anti-nuclear groups to block a proposed Navy base to be built for seven warships capable of carrying nuclear weapons garnered 102,624 petition signatures and space for question No. 6 on the city's ballot. But last-minute rulings by the New York Supreme Court and the court of appeals scuttled the referendum a week before the election. The lower court struck down the referendum on constitutional grounds, saying that it would hinder the U.S. government's right to provide for defense. The court of appeals argued that based on state law, every city was "authorized and empowered" to transfer land to the federal government for use as a military installation.

Mayor Ed Koch and Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY) reacted to the ruling with glee, heralding the economic boon they say the base will bring. But the Mobilization for Survival's Tom DeLuca, although disappointed that "New Yorkers didn't get to have their say," said he thinks talk about the would-be referendum has already done extensive damage to the pro-base position. "One of our goals was to create serious debate about the base, and we've done that. We think a majority of New York voters oppose the base, and the Navy is now aware of that and will have to listen." DeLuca cites an opinion poll conducted for MfS that shows 48 percent of registered voters opposed to the base, 37 percent favoring it and 15 percent undecided.

The next steps in the anti-nuclear harbor campaign include creating opposition to the Navy and the December environmental impact statement hearings, targeting pro-base politicians who are up for re-election soon and planning demonstrations for early spring. Though referendum No. 6 is out, DeLuca and others believe the Navy may still retreat if confronted with enough constant pressure.

## No shows

Scores of independent and third-party candidates also didn't make the ballot on election day because of what Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) calls the "labyrinth of state-enacted restrictions," created by the Democrats and Republicans in the past several years, that make ballot access for independent and minority candidates a hurdle in most states. For example, in California it takes 125,000 petition signatures for an independent candidate to run for federal office—five times the number of signatures necessary for a Democratic presidential candidate to run in every primary or caucus in the country. Arizona only requires 7,264 signatures, but stipulates that they be collected within a 10-day period. In Kansas, the petition circulator must live in the same neighborhood as the petition signers, even if the candidate is running for U.S. Congress. Every state is different, but the result is the same. According to Conyers, "a burdensome and restrictive environment" is set up, one that deprives the voters of "their

constitutional rights of freedom of political expression."

Conyers introduced legislation last May to help clear up the miasma of ballot access. HR 2320 states that a candidate be placed on the ballot after collecting signatures of equal to one-tenth of 1 percent of the number of registered voters. It also gives the petitioners 210 days to gather the signatures and says that the petition can be signed by anyone living in the same geographic area that the candidate will have jurisdiction over. Third parties and independents—the sources of several pieces of liberal legislation that was later adopted by mainstream parties, including women's suffrage, the graduated income tax and the direct election of senators by the voters—would then have a chance to regain once-held influence on public issues.

So far the bill has been endorsed by the ACLU, the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Operation PUSH and others. But for the last six months it's been languishing in the congressional subcommittee on house elections because chairman Rep. Al Swift (R-WA) refuses to schedule hearings on it, telling Conyers' office that "there are more important bills to consider first."



New York Mayor Ed Koch called the court's decision to reject the anti-nuclear referendum "a victory for the city." (New York's deep-six)

**In Tucson's** sanctuary trial, Chief U.S. District Judge Richard Bilby recently refused a motion by the defense to disqualify the presiding judge in that controversial case. Defense attorneys for the 11 sanctuary workers had asked that Judge Earl Carroll be disqualified on the grounds of conflict of interest and his visible bias against the defendants. Besides owning stock in the Phelps Dodge Corp., which has subsidiaries in El Salvador, Carroll's "constant quips, comments and innuendos" showed a concerted bias against the sanctuary workers, according to the defense attorneys. Selecting a jury for the trial has taken longer than was expected, and opening arguments were scheduled for last week. The trial will probably take from six to eight weeks, according to Judge Carroll.

**The number** of scientists and graduate students who've pledged to reject any Star Wars-related research funds has swollen to 2,800 in the last month, according to Prof. Michael Weissman, a campaign organizer. Many researchers represent the top universities for scientific research, including Columbia, MIT, California

Institute of Technology and Stanford. But a spokeswoman for the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization says the campaign will not affect the Star Wars program. She claims her office has received 3,000 research proposals from across the country and that 52 universities had already received contracts.

**Star Wars** proponents, on the other hand, have taken to television. A 30-second spot was sent on the airwaves in late October featuring a young girl who's saved from nuclear annihilation by the "Peace Shield" space defense system. The ads—which will be broadcast in 20 cities up to summit time—are hoped to help prevent a Star Wars trade-off in Geneva. "Strategic Defense Initiative must not be traded," said Lt. Gen. Daniel O. Graham, chairman of the Coalition for the SDI. "It is simply too important for the future of America."

**Houston's mayoral** and city council races were a bust for right-wing candidates touting "family values"—especially anti-homosexuality (see *In These Times*, Oct. 30).

Incumbent Mayor Kathy Whitmire beat former mayor Louie Welch by a comfortable margin (53 to 46 percent as *In These Times* went to press) and seven of the eight conservative "Straight State" city council candidates were defeated by more moderate candidates.

**In Santa Cruz**, two of the three available seats on the city council were won by leftists, giving them a continued four-to-three majority on the city council. Two former left council members, John Laird and Mardi Wormhoudt, regained their seats and were joined by conservative Joe Ghio. And Proposition A, a measure designed to prevent oil drilling in the bay, won by an overwhelming 80-to-20 percent.

**In New Haven**, the independent Green Party won an assured spot on the 1987 ballot by making a strong showing in last Tuesday's election. The six-month-old party gained high visibility by translating the issues of the anti-nuclear, environmentalist West German Green Party into local positions.

## Cold War, cool medium

Last winter, the very notion of visiting the Soviet Union to watch TV shows was enough to make heads roll at public television. Corporation for Public Broadcasting President Ed Pfister lost his position over the brouhaha caused by the proposed visit, in which board head Sonia Landau hinted broadly enough to anger many public TV execs that they wouldn't be able to tell the difference between "culture" and "propaganda." (This presumably explains the trend toward just-like-commercials on our public channels.) Although CPB withdrew support for the trip, Public Broadcasting Service executives went to Moscow anyway, and two weeks ago they returned, apparently unharmed by contact with socialist mind candy. PBS programming exec Suzanne Weil said, "We saw some very high quality, very nice programming, which I think would be very interesting to our audience." She was careful to cite cultural shows such as one on ballerina Anna Pavlova, rather than "heavy-duty public affairs programs or anything like that." Soviets appear to have been equally cautious about our public programs; there was interest in a National Geographic special on tigers, but no voiced enthusiasm for heavy-duty American public affairs programs, or anything like that.

*This week's contributors: Paul Bass, Pat Aufderheide*



By David Moberg

ANAHEIM, CA

**T**HIRTY YEARS AFTER THE American Federation of Labor merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations, there were some new signs of life in what many have considered a brain-dead corpse. But a debilitating stiffness still slows needed reform and revitalization.

As convention delegates assembled, it was clear that the decline in labor's fortunes has not been reversed, even though the rapid slide in some unions' membership has temporarily bottomed out, and some are gearing up for new organizing drives despite generally lackluster efforts and results in recent years. Union contract gains remain tiny, even lagging behind non-union wage improvements, but a few unions that made deep concessions in the early '80s are now fighting to redress those losses. Chrysler workers recently regained parity with Ford and General Motors, and meatpackers have been striking more than in any year since 1948 to regain part of what they surrendered earlier.

Last winter the AFL-CIO released a report on "The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions." It was the strongest official recognition of some of the evident problems in the labor movement and a call for more innovative tactics. Some unions have already used most of the ideas, most of which were a slightly altered revival of earlier labor strategies. Overall the report signaled a need to broaden the labor movement—to reach more workers on more issues, while projecting an image of an across-the-board advocate for working people and their families.

The report has encouraged stirrings within some unions. It "gives legitimacy to a lot of younger people out there wanting to try new ideas," argued Industrial Union Department (IUD) staff representative Joseph Uehlein. "Previously, there was much more resistance."

Yet there is still resistance. One union proposed names of 50 officials for a new media training program run by the AFL-CIO, but only five agreed to take part. And an organizer of a new "one-on-one" project to train local stewards and others to talk with rank-and-file members noted, "Some local leaders don't like it. They think you'll upset the applecart. They've got the votes counted."

Even at the top the message doesn't always sink in: while picking four new members for its executive council, the AFL-CIO passed over the only woman president of a member union, even though women represent one of the largest untapped constituencies for unions and only two women sit on the executive council.

Some reassessment is occurring, against AFL-CIO leaders' desires. Delegates at this convention had the most extensive discussion in three decades on the federation's foreign policy (see accompanying story). That reflected the growing challenge to the obsessed anti-Communism of top AFL-CIO policymakers by a National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador, supported by 23 unions, including many of the biggest.

For an organization with a long history of extreme deference to the president—enforced in a disastrously counterproductive way by former president George Meany—and with a widely shared desire to show monolithic unity, even when it doesn't exist, and to avoid open discussion of anything, the debate was a refreshing breeze that may remove some of the stalcigar-smoke image and reality from the labor movement.

Unions need both the appearance and reality of democracy to win unorganized new workers—younger, better-educated, more white-collar—and to maintain allegiance to more traditionally unionized fields. They also need more diverse links with the extremely varied contemporary working class.

"There has to be more advocacy as opposed to simply collective bargaining," argued Service Employees Vice President Rosemary Trump. "We have to be seen as



AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland

## LABOR

## Teaching the AFL-CIO some new tricks

not representing just dues payers but as the only representative of all working people."

Some associate member plans have already been launched in Virginia, the Clothing and Textile Workers (ACTWU), working with the Industrial Areas Foundation, is experimenting with a community-based union organizing drive. Workers can join the union as associates even when their workplace does not have a contract. In Texas—soon to be followed by Illinois, Louisiana and California—the Teachers Federation (AFT) has offered a special package to teachers that includes insurance, legal representation, a newspaper and a professional journal, discounts and a cheaper credit card.

Several unions have expressed skepti-

cism. They argue that unions shouldn't be service groups but rather "fighting membership organizations." Yet if the associate plan is used as an adjunct to union and political organizing, not as a substitute, such objections will decline. "Benefits are just Scotch tape," said Bob Welch of the Service Employees. "You've got to give people a voice in what's going on in their job."

The convention approved one move in that direction, the creation of a program of benefits that could include various kinds of insurance, a publication, legal service and a special low-interest credit card with exoneration of payments during short terms of unemployment or strikes. Individual unions could offer this package to members, who could retain it if they left the union because

they changed jobs.

Today there are 28 million non-union workers who formerly belonged to the union, more than twice the number currently in all AFL-CIO unions combined. Officials hope this service will keep them related to the labor movement, expand political mailing lists and nurture workers who might be active in organizing new workplaces.

Union leaders are learning slowly that they must plan strategically and not simply react to employer moves or to random calls from discontented workers who want a union. The five-union coordinated organizing drive at Blue Cross/Blue Shield companies may, like the two-union campaign at Beverly Nursing Homes, become a model for such strategic organizing.

## Political action

The AFL-CIO insisted it will keep its options open on presidential endorsements in the primary, but the Mondale fizzle produced one on-going benefit: development of a training program for direct, one-on-one communication with members. Dick Wilson, who is overseeing the trial effort in three states, said that typically local offi-

*Continued on following page*

## Will labor movement remain shock troops of the Cold War?

LD were cultivating the Popular Democratic Unity (UPD) as the expression of Salvadoran democratic unionism. But when UPD leaders, who supported President Duarte's election, complained that he was not living up to the social compact he had signed, AIFLD tried to set up a rival coalition and force unions to join it by cutting off AFL-CIO aid. One reported AIFLD complaint: UPD was pressuring Duarte to negotiate with the rebels—supposedly also the official AFL-CIO position.

On the convention floor, some union leaders were unwilling to make an open fight against Kirkland, especially when many union presidents are lukewarm about foreign affairs. "Nobody wants to see blood on the floor when we're fighting on 100 fronts," one National Committee negotiator said.

But even though the "big guns"—AFSCME and the UAW, for example—were silent after the compromise was worked out, debate was uncorked anyway when Kenneth Blaylock, president of the Government Employees union took the floor.

"Now, I don't know about the rest of you people here," he said, a bit of the country drawl in his voice, "but when I look at Iran, I look at Vietnam, I look at Nicaragua, I look at El Salvador, Guatemala, I would like for one time for my government to be on the side of the people, not on the side of rich dictators living behind high walls."

Blaylock's moving statement unleashed a long train of supporters of AIFLD policy and attacks on Nicaragua: Bricklayers President John Joyce, Steelworkers Vice President Leon Lynch, Teachers President Albert Shanker (who said that if he were in Nicaragua, he might very well be a *contra*) and several state federation presidents who had been on AIFLD tours. Most condemned the Sandinista government as, in Shanker's words, "on its way to full dictatorship." A piqued Kirkland, speaking at the end of the debate, said, "I react to and resent the criticisms of AIFLD, suggesting they were 'a knife in the back' to agents who deserve labor's support."

But the opposition made its mark with speeches by Screen Actors Guild President Ed Asner, Hospital Union Vice President Jerry Brown and two other delegates. "It does not make me proud to see us bolstering the foreign policies of those whose stated goals include the destruction of the labor movement, like Orrin Hatch and Ronald Reagan," Asner said.

Brown said that the AFL-CIO had not yet learned from "the shame of this labor movement in not speaking out against American involvement in Vietnam. And I think that when we say we have to give a different image to the American people and to American workers, we ought to look at how somehow or other we are always, always the shock troops of the Cold War."

—D.M.



Continued from preceding page

cials talked mainly to other officials and workers who had problems. Now other workers hear from and speak to those officials. They learn that the union is doing something for them—for example, in the legislature. Many workers "have a narrow conception of what the union does," Wilson said. "This broadens it."

Yet labor officials, often under financial pressure, are always looking for short cuts. Organizing drives require extensive research and intensive activity. The use of television and better public relations can help, yet there is the danger it will be seen as a substitute. "Ultimately, you can't substitute anything for organizing through personal relations, because that's what the company does," argued ACTWU organizer Bill Patterson, who recently helped the union use TV and radio in its losing organizing effort at the large Cannon Mills textile complex.

And mass media slickness can even be dangerous. The Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) recently produced a clever series of ads using actress Vicki Lawrence as the Mama character she created for the *Carol Burnett Show*. But the message is often a crude plea not to shop at certain stores because they are foreign-owned.

If the labor movement is to move from simplistic protectionism—a common theme throughout the convention—to the more sophisticated "managed trade...that benefits all countries," as Steelworker President Lynn Williams advocated, it will have to rise above xenophobia. One main weapon against multinationals will be international union cooperation, and that will be hard to obtain if American labor bashes foreigners and continues to interfere destructively against left unions and political movements in the Third World.

When it came time to pick its top leaders, however, entrenched power superceded building for the future. Robert Georgine, head of the building trades department of the AFL-CIO, lobbied hard and success-

fully to win a vacant seat on the executive council to maintain traditional building trades representation. Industrial unions largely opposed him unless the IUD head also got a seat, since traditionally only presidents of individual unions serve. But they had to be satisfied with Milan Stone of the Rubber Workers. Then the new Operating Engineers president succeeded his retiring predecessor. The remaining open slot went to Professional Athletes President Gene Upshaw, a former football player. Although his selection raised black representation on the 35-member council to three, Upshaw is not known as a strong exponent of black interests. He does not, for example, belong to the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

The logical woman candidate, Linda Puchala, president of the new Flight Attendants union, was opposed by the Pilots' president, since he wanted a seat his union once held, and insiders offered other reasons: new union, small union, jurisdictional conflicts over flight attendants, past friction with other unions.

By its own surveys, 41 percent of AFL-CIO members are white-collar workers, and women represent a growing part of the workforce that must be organized. Yet the AFL-CIO remained wedded to declining building trades. Change comes all too slowly.

## Arguments

Continued from page 3

many of his suggestions resemble policy options held over from the days of the Great Society, he is not reluctant to incorporate neoconservative insights. For example, he contends, "Affirmative action is a program that simply does not work for the masses of black people." Only those who probably would have made it anyway benefit from affirmative action, he says.

But he differs radically from Sowell on the role of welfare in the black family's deterioration. Rather than blame the wel-

fare system for providing incentive for illegitimate births and single-parent families, as the neocons do, Wilson provides hard data indicating that unemployment is the primary factor. In a recent paper entitled *Poverty and Family Structure: The Widening Gap between Evidence and Public Policy*, Wilson and University of Chicago graduate student Kathryn Neckerman devise something called a "marriageable pool index." This index demonstrates that between the ages of 20-34—the prime period for marriage and family formation—there were only 47 employed single black men for every 100 single black women.

Wilson says his current research on family and the structure of poverty is developing into a devastating critique of the Charles Murray—author of the neocon bible, *Losing Ground*—thesis.

### Blaming the New Deal

Harold Cruse, professor emeritus at the University of Michigan, is the author of the highly influential 1967 book *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* and thus is familiar with the dynamics of the current debate.

"It's a new phenomenon, but it's terribly belated," Cruse explains. "What we have is a small stratum of black thinkers who have begun to realize that the civil rights cycle is over. Civil rights leadership is irrelevant, moribund, but most people simply don't want to recognize this."

Unlike Marable, Cruse finds validity in what the black neocons are saying, though he also faults them for letting themselves be used by the reigning Reaganauts. "What's required now is new institutionalized black leadership," he says. "It has to have a base in the community, it has to be nationwide and it has to break with the NAACP, the Urban League and those other antiquated groups. It has to stress self-reliance and black nationalism."

Cruse's prescription for black progress parallels those of the black neocons. He also has similar villains. "The New Deal is what did blacks in," he contends. "Up until then, black leadership took responsibility

for black progress. After the New Deal, the government became responsible and black leaders were absolved."

According to him, blacks were making great strides in the cooperative economic movement before the New Deal's advent. Like so much in the history of black Americans, those programs were a double-edged sword: "The New Deal saved many of us from hunger during the Depression, but it later developed a hunger in us for government dependency." Cruse cites desegregation as another two-edged development: while it did allow blacks more access to what this country has to offer, it decimated many inner-city communities by leaving them bereft of positive role models and resources.

Cruse points to the economic nationalism of Booker T. Washington as black America's surest way to progress, and he heralds Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association as proof that large numbers of grassroots blacks can be mobilized for a nationalist agenda. He also locates the pedigree of today's black neocons in the ideas and policies of Washington.

The similarity of Cruse's feelings about the black neocons and black nationalists point to the similarities between the two groups. Both cultivate increased self-reliance and less concern with integration. Both emphasize developing cultural values that stress the work ethic, discipline and delayed gratification. Neocon Loury's criticisms of Black Muslim Farrakhan are surprisingly mild: "I support much of what he does and I hear a good message in much of what he says. But his racism and anti-Semitism are a bit troubling."

Marable is also an admirer of Washington, but he denies the black neocons' entry into Booker T.'s sphere of influence. "These guys like Loury, Sowell and Woodson are not connected to social forces in the black community. Washington and Garvey were connected. Farrakhan is connected. These neoconservatives are imposters who basically are prostituting their views for the benefit of the reactionary, racist right."

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## EDUCATION

## Campus watchdogs bare teeth

By Rosanna Perotti

**W**ERE NOT THAT POWERFUL," Malcolm Lawrence insisted when pounded with questions for more than an hour about Accuracy in Media's newest spinoff, Accuracy in Academia (AIA). "This has simply struck a nervous chord in academia like nothing else," the group's president continued. "They [U.S. universities] are a big, big operation, with lots of vested interests. They don't want their turf stepped on.... What on earth are they afraid of?"

That first interview with Lawrence was held in August after Accuracy in Academia had announced its national crusade to expose Marxist and liberal bias in American classrooms. Classroom monitors, Lawrence noted, would be volunteers, not recruits. AIA would not make personal targets of professors but simply publish the "inaccuracies" heard in classes in its national newsletter.

Yet three months and many articles and interviews later, it's becoming clear that AIA may pose a threat to academic freedom. On October 25, AIA's board chose John LeBoutillier, 32, to replace former foreign service officer Lawrence, 60, as president. LeBoutillier is the brash former congressman from New York's sixth district whose memories as an ultraconservative undergraduate in the aftermath of the 1969 anti-Vietnam strike are preserved in his 1978 book titled *Harvard Hates America*.

AIA has just released its first newsletter that attacks Dr. Mark Reader, a tenured associate professor at Arizona State University in Phoenix. Reader's survey course in political science, according to AIA, emphasizes "fears of nuclear war, power and weapons." AIA wants Reader to spend more time discussing "peace through strength."

The academic community, primarily the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), which decided wearily to await publication of AIA's first newsletter, may regret having delayed a counterattack.

## Upholding tradition

AIA is the brainchild of Reed Irvine's Accuracy in Media (AIM), the self-proclaimed "watchdog group" that received a \$30,000 "emergency grant" from the National Endowment for the Humanities to air a rebuttal last summer to PBS' *Vietnam: A Television History*. Claiming that there are more than 10,000 "Marxists" teaching in U.S. universities, AIM chairman Irvine assembled its board of directors from the upper ranks of AIM and higher education lobbying groups last spring. Then, railing against "the indoctrination of future journalists and other influential members of our society," the August-A issue of the "AIM Report" called upon college students and senior citizens to enroll in "problem courses" and provide AIM with "tape recordings or notes of statements made by the teachers...which they believe to be seriously in error."

"We want to report the things that are going on in university lectures," then-President Malcolm Lawrence said in August. "We want to say this is what you're paying for, for X professor to go into X college and advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government.... We are concerned with upholding our traditional American system of government, and recommend a strong national defense. Imbalance means you bring in someone who has in mind revolution and moving toward a system of world socialism."

The real threat is AIA's tactics, not its ideology. Recruiting students to enter classrooms, to record and take notes of statements, and collect syllabi, reading lists and

course descriptions flies in the face of a professor's right to teach and research. As with Prof. Reader, AIA attempts to get professors to either recant or collect their "inaccurate statements." Just as important, AIA threatens the already dwindling autonomy of the university itself. Publishing professors' statements in its monthly newsletter is intended to put public and legislative pressures on trustees to get rid of liberal faculty members.

Clearly, AIA is not urging ideological tolerance and responsibility. Instead, it is reviving intolerance under the guise of the former. AIA is also compiling an academic blacklist.

Its tactics are becoming more widespread. AIA has been sending out news releases to individual campuses. AIM's Irvine estimates that about 110 campuses, including Harvard, Yale and Brown, are now working with the program.

AIA's example has also spurred students to replicate its tactics locally. At the University of Washington, Seattle, for example, conservative students at an October 9 news conference accused two professors of "bias" in their courses on nuclear war and lesbianism respectively. Other professors were maligned in the *Washington Spec-*

*tator's* October piece, "Hall of Fame and Hall of Shame."

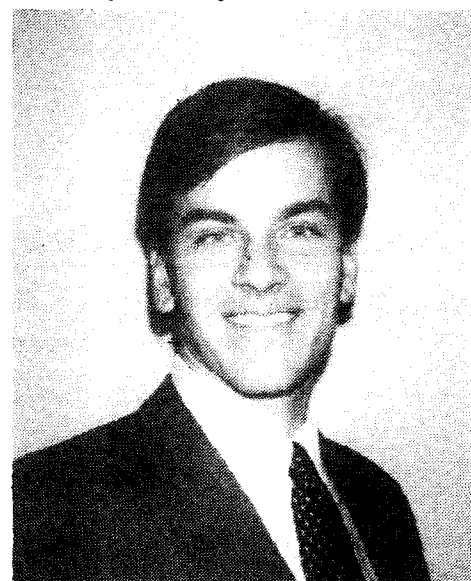
AIA's tactics are not new, however. Paul Lazarsfeld's and Wagner Thielens' *The Academic Mind* (1958), a statistical look at the effects of McCarthyism in academe, alluded to anti-Communist groups that collected information later used in the infamous legislative hearings of 1949-54.

"Respondents [academics polled] described instances where students reported to a colleague, a dean of the school, a local American Legion, a politician or a state legislator.... Some students were...instituted organization...students for America which take it upon themselves to seek out subversive attitudes among teachers. Some teachers, too, were convinced the FBI had an agent in their classes."

## Ideological converts

AIA is better funded and more centralized than any right-wing student group in U.S. history, according to AAUP spokespersons. Its support, in large part, comes from the alternative right-wing student newspapers which have received funding from Irving Kristol's Institute for Educational Affairs over the past three years. In addition, AIA

**AIA threatens the dwindling autonomy of the university. It is reviving intolerance and compiling an academic blacklist**



Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown

Les Csorba (top) is AIA's executive director. Reed Irvine is the group's founder.

has money: a \$160,000 budget this year (\$50,000 has been collected to date) will enable it to make grants—for example, they will pay a \$140 stipend for adults to audit "problem courses." It's gotten ample staff and temporary facilities from Accuracy in Media. And it's got an energetic and committed executive director, Les Csorba III, 22, a political science major fresh out of the University of California-Davis.

Despite AIA's apparent organizational strength, questions abound about how truly influential a national classroom monitoring group can be. AIA's legitimacy may be hindered by its national scope. In Seattle, for example, the *Washington Spectator* crowd decided purposely not to affiliate with AIA and instead launched its own campus-wide group of students to report "inaccuracies."

"We thought it was better presented where the students were on a campus doing it rather than an outside group coming in," said publisher Joe Friend. "Washington State is very independent. If there's a movement going on they want it to be independent."

If AIA's organizational potential isn't enough of a threat to universities, then the demonstrated influence of its parent organization is. AIM's ability to get federal funding for its *Vietnam* rebuttal indicates it has some pull, contends Ernest Benjamin, secretary general of the AAUP.

And individual members of the AIM hierarchy have lent their personal influence. LeBoutillier, ultra-conservative boy wonder, is a case in point. He was only a Harvard sophomore when his first feat—a \$250,000 sweep for the Senate campaign of McGovern challenger Leo Thorsness—made him a sought-after congressional fundraiser. Contributors to LeBoutillier's own 1980 congressional campaign included Gerald Ford, former Treasury Secretary William Simon and Reagan associates Justin Dart and Holmes Tuttle. LeBoutillier, a descendant of the Vanderbilts and Whitneys, contributed \$200,000 of his own money to his election.

But LeBoutillier is better known for *Harvard Hates America* and his antics during his one term in office. The antics include calling Charles Percy, former Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman, a "wimp," a "shrimp," a "turkey," a "weak-fish" and an "idiot," and making a controversial journey to Laos and Thailand to recover American MIAs.

The book is a hatchet job purporting to blow the "Communist conspiracy" at Harvard out of the water. ("I might as well tell you that I'm a radical...and we're going to be working this year in here to teach some basic tenets of my radical thought," one professor proclaims, according to LeBoutillier's account.)

To LeBoutillier, AIA is a chance to explore similar issues: "They [professors] are using the classroom to promote their own personal political agendas," he told *In These Times*. "And they even use the power of the grade" to form students' opinions.

Csorba has also demonstrated an ability to rally conservatives in government. Early in the winter 1985 quarter, Csorba, then head of a campus group called Students for a Better America, suggested that Saul Landau, then a visiting lecturer at Davis, was an agent of Fidel Castro. The ensuing campus battle attracted the attention of California State Sen. H.L. Richardson. Richardson pursued the Landau case to Santa Cruz, where the documentary filmmaker had a spring teaching assignment in Latin American studies and sociology, and in April 1985 demanded a list of faculty members responsible for inviting Landau. "We wanted to talk to them one-on-one to ascertain their thought processes" in selecting Landau, said Michael Carrington, Richardson's chief of staff.

But they never got the list from the college—instead, 100 Santa Cruz professors signed a petition protesting Richardson's intervention. Still, Richardson's staffers have vowed to assemble a "comparative list of speakers" in such subjects as political science, economic and sociology to demonstrate the "liberal and biased" pollution of academe.

Continued on page 22



## FOREIGN POLICY

# The Geneva summit pits Star Wars against future of arms control

By Diana Johnstone

**T**O THE WATCHING WORLD, THE November 19-20 Geneva summit meeting between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachov looms as the historic crossroads between arms control and Star Wars.

If Reagan and Gorbachov agree to arms control, the course is reasonably clear. There is a consensus among specialists that a comprehensive nuclear test ban could stop the nuclear arms race. Mutual reductions of nuclear arsenals could then be worked out. Without the burden of astronomical military budgets, the world could get to work on its real problems.

If Star Wars is chosen, the future is unforeseeable. A Pandora's box of new problems will further divert the attention of the rich nations from famine, soil erosion, water pollution and the breakdown of social systems.

Instead, they will have to worry about such things as the unpredictable shakeup in the strategic balance. Pentagon leaders seem eager for such a challenge. Recuperating from the anti-nuclear movement's fear that "Mutual Assured Destruction" (MAD) is not a deterrence doctrine but a plan for exactly what it says, they promise safety through the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger went so far as to suggest that trading away SDI would amount to a "mutual suicide pact." Reagan won't want to do a thing like that.

But nobody knows what SDI is, other than a pork barrel that should enable defense contractors to buy most American and allied politicians and news media over the next few years. If it's only a bargaining chip, then it has already reached top value and should be cashed in for a deal with the Soviets. Otherwise, there may be no way of stopping it short of national bankruptcy.

In strategic terms, worst-case logic compels the Russians to perceive SDI as an American effort to gain first-strike capacity by protecting U.S. territory from retaliation. Soviet leaders have said clearly that this is the way they perceive it, and that there can therefore be no nuclear arms limitations, much less reductions, while the

U.S. goes ahead with Star Wars. Thus Star Wars means more and more nuclear weapons.

## Murky territory

But Star Wars is not that clear, and neither the Soviets nor America's NATO allies can yet be sure what it will mean for them if Reagan decides to forge ahead. It puts the Soviets in a quandary. If they proliferate their own missiles to ensure penetration of "Star Wars" defenses, this will be used to justify SDI and to frighten the Europeans. They don't want to spend the money trying to match the Americans.

Is this part of the American calculation? Is SDI a big bluff? Will the U.S. go broke first?

Europeans also have to wonder what the Pentagon has in mind by trying to make MAD deterrence obsolete. A first strike against the Soviet Union still looks too crazy even to contemplate. Insofar as SDI works well enough to have strategic uses, Pentagon strategists are likelier to be thinking in terms of securing full territorial invulnerability in order to gain a free hand to intervene in "regional" conflicts without restraint, using even chemical or tactical nuclear weapons—as described in the official U.S. Army "Airland Battle 2000" manual of August 1982. Safe under its SDI anti-missile umbrella, the U.S. could wage full-scale war—even nuclear war—in various regions.

Is Europe such a "region"? Europeans are divided over how to avoid this fate. One approach would be to clear out the nuclear weapons and create a nuclear weapons-free zone. The opposite approach—the one that prevails in NATO circles—is to cling ever closer to the U.S. in the hope that SDI will be extended to Western Europe.

This hope largely defies geographical realities. Nevertheless, the habit in NATO of following the American lead is quite strong. So far, the divisions being caused by Star Wars seem to be internal to each NATO country and parallel to divisions within the U.S. itself, rather than a split between the U.S. on one side and the Europeans on the other. Defense ministries tend to echo the Pentagon. And foreign ministries tend to have doubts, and nostalgia for detente.

Strong opposition to Star Wars is expressed by a number of independent experts, while the most coherent political opposition comes from the disarmament policy specialists of the Socialist International and its

member parties, especially the Scandinavians, Germans, Austrians and British Laborites.

The Pentagon whipped NATO defense ministers into line for a show of "alliance solidarity" prior to the summit. Weinberger even got them to endorse U.S. charges that the Soviet Union has been violating the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, while summarily rejecting the Soviet offer to discuss the controversial radar installation near Krasnoyarsk in central Siberia. The Pentagon contends it is an anti-missile installation in violation of the ABM Treaty, while the Russians claim it is for satellite tracking.

Such controversies can be worked out. It seems fairly obvious that current U.S. insistence on Soviet violations of the ABM Treaty is merely an effort to pass the buck for the ABM Treaty's inevitable collapse should the U.S. go ahead with Star Wars. The treaty is the cornerstone of arms control. If it collapses, arms control collapses. On the other hand, assuming Reagan is determined to pursue his laser rainbow, those European NATO leaders who want a share of SDI will also be in violation of the ABM Treaty and thus have an interest in blaming the Soviets for its collapse.

This does not mean people believe it, any more than they believe the tortuous compromise "interpretation" of the ABM Treaty as allowing Star Wars, although the whole purpose of the treaty was to maintain deterrence by banning a missile defense that could protect a first-striker from retaliation. All this would become obsolete if leaders accepted the conclusions of "nuclear winter" studies and admitted that the foreseeable destruction of our shared earthly environment by nuclear weapons is their best deterrent.

## Deal with the Dutch

Reagan's November 1 arms proposal to the Russians contains a detail that looks very much like the pay-off to the Dutch government for its final consent to deploy cruise missiles in the Netherlands. That is a U.S. proposal to limit Euromissiles to 140 launchers on each side, roughly the number that the U.S. will have installed in West Germany, Italy, Britain and Belgium by the end of this year—well before the scheduled deployment in Holland. It seems that a discreet deal has been struck to satisfy NATO in word and the powerful Dutch peace movement in deed by saying cruise missiles will be deployed in the Netherlands, but then finding a reason not to deploy them.

The Soviets might go along with a deal of this sort, as they show no eagerness to pursue a medium-range nuclear missile race in Europe. They have been criticized—notably by Mary Kaldor in the *New Statesman*—for not making a more explicit offer to the Dutch to cut back SS-20s in return for non-deployment of cruise. But not even the Dutch peace movement was asking clearly for such a deal, and the Soviets are probably not optimistic enough to think they would have got any more for their offer than accusations of "trying to drive a wedge" between NATO and one of its most faithful members.

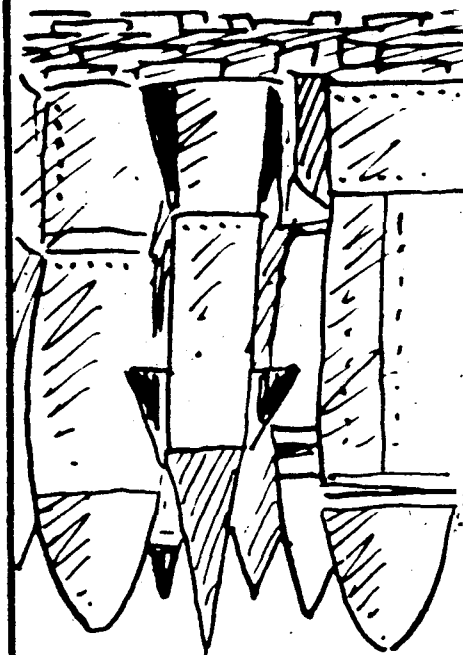
In fact, perhaps out of realism, the Soviets have not been placing any wedges. The Soviet Union obviously considers NATO cruise missiles wherever they are to

*a freeze," I said "with a freeze"—meaning that whatever is left would be left as is, or would you want a modernization of the warheads and weapons left? That's my question.*

We're talking about reductions, so we're talking about getting rid of warheads.

*Does that exclude making any new ones?* In certain respects it would exclude modernization and in certain respects it may not. It would depend on what exactly was being kept to be modernized.

Adelman then launched into the complaint that the Soviets are violating SALT II by developing not one but two new ICBMs, which in fact proves, if anything, that a freeze would be clearer than past arms-control agreements. —D.J.



be under U.S. control—which is the case. Gorbachov said he would discuss British and French nuclear forces with London and Paris if they are willing. This is not "wedge-driving" but acceptance of officially proclaimed responsibilities.

Any splits in NATO will come from inner strains, not Soviet wedges. Strains have been building up from the arguments against arms control agreements spread by the Reagan administration's SDI apologists, especially arguments undermining the ABM Treaty.

Reaganites have even tried to discredit any concern for arms control as inherently pro-Soviet. Indeed, discrediting concern for arms control seems to be the job of none other than the director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Kenneth Adelman. He told the Socialist International disarmament conference in Vienna in mid-October that "putting the spotlight on arms control serves the Soviet interest." Instead, Adelman wanted to stress "fundamental moral and political differences" between the U.S. and the USSR.

"Weapons are the symptom of this struggle, not its cause," he declared. His ideological harangue made what one delegate called a "catastrophic impression" on the gathering.

Diplomatically, Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme confessed to being "worried" by the lengths Adelman went to dwell on alleged Soviet failure to comply with the ABM Treaty. Palme stressed that the ABM Treaty is still very much alive.

## Road to nowhere

Willy Brandt stressed the special responsibility of Soviet and American leaders, not only to the people of their own countries, but to all the people of the world. World public opinion is sick of hearing each side blame the other. This leads nowhere, observed Brandt.

"It is no longer of interest to hear that

## Reducing and freezing

The following are excerpts from a press conference Kenneth Adelman, director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, held in Vienna on October 17.

**ITT: Does the U.S. want to pursue a reduction that would be together with a freeze or a reduction that is part of a modernization process?**

**Adelman:** What we want to do is to have a reduction that goes far beyond what a freeze would go. A freeze would leave in ballistic missile warheads, for example, today the Soviet Union and the U.S. with between 8,500 and 9,000 ballistic missile

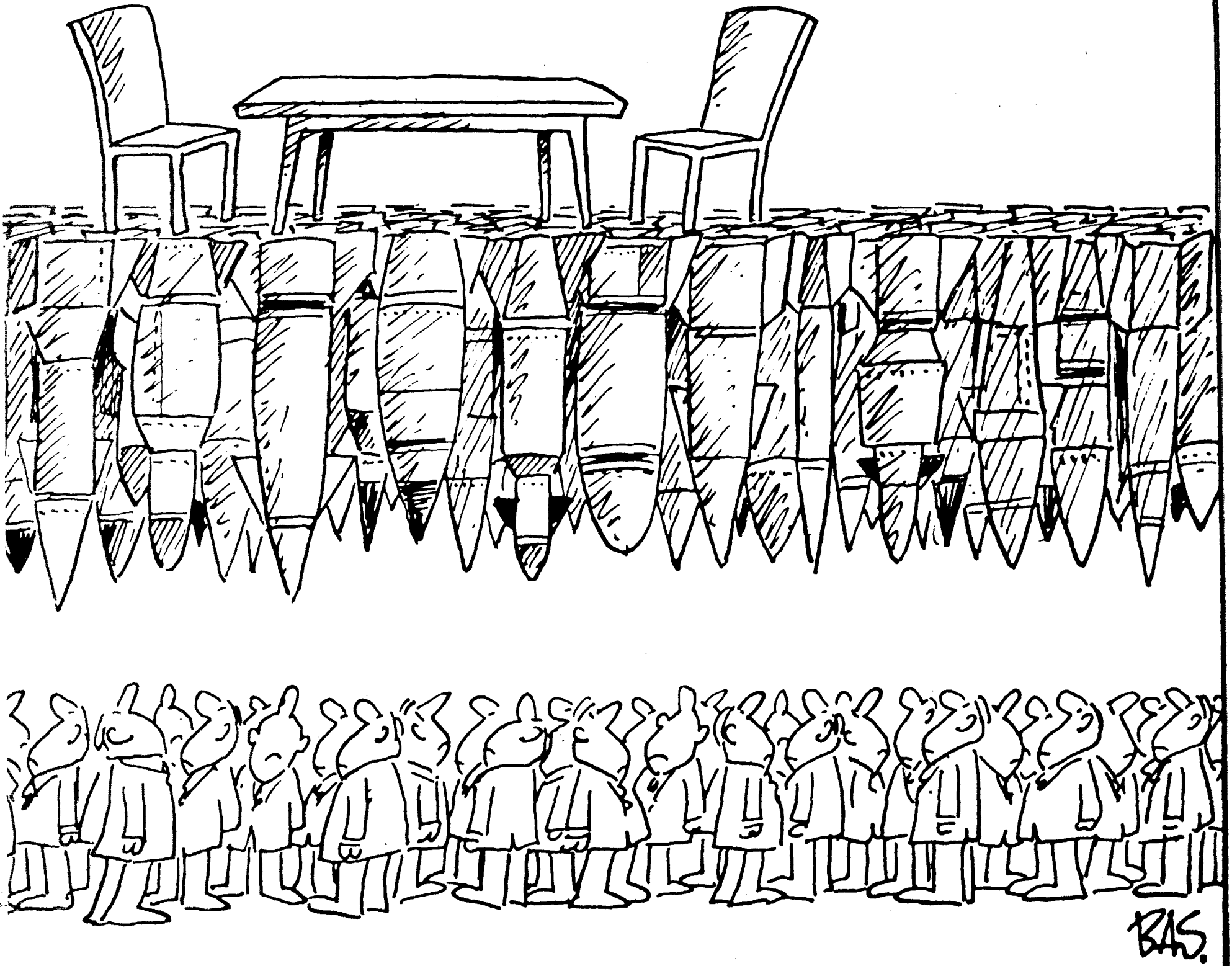
warheads. We think that's just way too high. They're just too many ballistic missile warheads in the world. So what we would like is a proposal that goes down to 5,000 ballistic missile warheads. By the time you negotiate a freeze, talk about a freeze, you might as well not have the high levels but go down and have real reductions.

**Fine, but that doesn't answer my question.**

I thought it did.

**It doesn't at all. I didn't say "instead of**





In strategic terms, worst-case logic compels the Russians to perceive SDI as an American effort to gain first-strike capacity by protecting U.S. territory from retaliation. They are therefore obliged to increase their offensive capabilities. Thus Star Wars means more and more nuclear weapons.

one side is always acting to upset the arms balance while the other side is always reacting to catch up."

Finnish Premier Kalevi Sorsa complained that the arms race is not only "a menace and a waste," but also a restriction on freedom. "We, as individuals and nations, have been deprived of our right to develop our societies freely, not to speak of our right to survival."

"Any offhand rejection of a disarmament offer is detrimental to international understanding," the Soviet International said in an appeal to U.S. and Soviet leaders to improve their relations and strengthen arms control. Socialist International leaders called for thorough examination of the Soviet Union's "constructive proposal" to reduce nuclear weapons, and a constructive U.S. response to the Soviet offer to extend its nuclear test moratorium beyond January 1986.

But Adelman responded that "the Soviet-proposed moratorium on nuclear testing is a shopworn and threadbare idea. It was

rather cynically timed to aim at the Hiroshima anniversary rather than at serious arms control. While it appears superficially attractive, neither their moratorium nor a comprehensive test ban would get at the problems of reducing nuclear weapons...."

And off Adelman went into the ever more familiar U.S. dodge based on "reductions" and "verification." A mere freeze, or a test ban, isn't good enough; the U.S. wants "real reductions." Thus the U.S. scorns proposals for nuclear-free or chemical weapons-free zones on the pretense that they would somehow interfere with the worldwide weapons bans desired by the U.S. Worldwide bans, it is claimed, are what is desired; but, unfortunately, they are not verifiable. Verification is the all-purpose stumbling block.

Indeed, any measure that can be verified

isn't big enough. And any measure that's big enough can't be verified.

This insistence on reductions sounds like the "build down-build up" concept, that is, the Pentagon effort to disguise *modernization*—the retirement of old weapons to make way for new ones, perhaps fewer and smaller but qualitatively superior—as a step toward disarmament.

"The first step in building down is to stop building up, whether the building up is by addition to armaments or by 'modernization' of armaments," said British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock. "While reduction of existing resources is to be welcomed, it could actually proceed and yet still leave greater capacity for death and destruction simply because 'modernized' systems were being installed even while the obsolete and obsolescent weapons were being negotiated away," he said. The answer is a freeze, by way of a test ban, the easiest agreement to verify.

#### Stumbling block

Nevertheless, Adelman told his Vienna press conference that "one of the big stumbling blocks on the nuclear test issue is the question of verification. We have wanted to discuss verification with the Soviets for a good number of years, the Soviets have said 'nyet, nyet, nyet.'"

This caricature may go down in Washington, D.C., swarming with arms industry lobbyists, but it won't wash in Austria, where folks know a thing or two about negotiating with the Soviets.

In fact, the Soviet attitude toward verification, including on-site verification, is by no means so negative. But even if it were, nuclear tests can be verified by seismic monitors and delivery system tests can be verified by satellite. Without testing, the arms race would necessarily grind to a halt.

To help clinch the argument for a comprehensive test ban, leaders of six countries—Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico,

Sweden and Tanzania—recently got together on a Four Continents Peace Initiative that includes a promise to verify a test ban treaty concluded by the two superpowers. Seismic devices located in those six far-flung countries on four continents could certainly monitor a ban effectively.

The Socialist International welcomed the Four Continents Peace Initiative, noting that it aimed "to ensure that the fate of disarmament is not left to the nuclear superpowers alone."

## Dealing to Europeans

Soviet leaders are ready to match British nuclear disarmament measures, Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock told the Socialist International disarmament conference in Vienna. Kinnock said his party had received a standing offer from Andropov, Chernenko and now Gorbachov to agree to a "missile for missile" reduction in response to British Labour's disarmament proposals. The Labour Party leader said he knew from various enquiries that the Soviet Union was willing to match British decommissioning of Polaris submarines with comparable Soviet decommissioning.

This, like Gorbachov's Paris offer to talk directly with Britain and France about nuclear arms, indicates that the USSR may be preparing to try to work out European theater arms reductions with the Europeans if U.S.-Soviet agreement is blocked by Reaganite infatuation with Star Wars.

—D.J.



# THE PHILIPPINES

By James B. Goodno

MANILA

**A** NEW PATTERN OF VIOLENCE is emerging in cities and towns throughout the Philippines as the government responds to a series of militant demonstrations and strikes with a naked show of military might and force.

September and October were among the bloodiest months in population centers since Ferdinand Marcos became president 20 years ago. At least 29 anti-government protesters were slain by military, police and paramilitary forces. As many as a dozen or more persons—civilians, government troopers and alleged members of the leftist New People's Army (NPA) were killed in incidents authorities said were tied to protest actions.

Aside from those killed, scores of individuals were injured during clashes or one-sided assaults involving demonstrators armed with rocks and debris and gun-toting troops in Manila, Cebu, Davao and Iloilo cities and Escalante town since August 21.

Clearly, no end to the troubles is in sight. In late October Marcos warned "violent demonstrators" that he was fast running out of patience and would soon suspend the

noticed in this violence-prone country were it not for the slaughter of at least 27 protesters in the Negros Occidental town of Escalante on September 20. According to eyewitnesses, a composite squad of Philippine Constabulary soldiers and paramilitary Integrated Civilian Home Defense Force members opened fire on 5,000 unarmed demonstrators supporting an island-wide general strike in that town when the group refused to be dispersed by tear gas and water from fire trucks. The first victim was felled after she threw a tear-gas canister, tossed first by the authorities, into an empty lot. Then the carnage began.

Shortly after the massacre, Acting Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos said his men were acting in self defense. This statement was made more than a month before a panel created by Minister of National Defense Juan Ponce Enrile began its investigation into the massacre. In part because of Ramos' statement, Kilusang Mayo Uno or May First Movement (KMU) Chairman and Bayan Vice President Rolando Olalia refused to join the investigating team. (Seventeen of the dead belonged to the National Federation of Sugar Workers, an affiliate of the KMU labor center.) Instead, the KMU asked the International Labor Organization to investigate.

and then the stick. We are preparing an analysis. Now we just have the raw data."

The raw data are revealing: at least 15 civilians and four soldiers hurt in Cebu City on August 21 during a clash outside the local Constabulary-Integrated National Police Camp; the September 20 massacre in Escalante; several violent incidents accompanying Welgang Bayans or People's Strikes in Davao City and Iloilo in September and October; and the killing of two demonstrators in Manila on October 21.

Two students' deaths due to bullet wounds inflicted by Manila police during a march of some 5,000 peasants and their supporters in downtown Manila were the first protesters' deaths in the national capital in more than two years. (Earlier this year two high-school students who were not participating in a demonstration died as a result of injuries received when a teargas canister thrown by police exploded in a crowded disco during a demonstration outside and last year a bystander was shot by police during an attack on a demonstration, but they were not protesters themselves.)

Immediately after the clash, which also resulted in 15 protesters being treated for gunshot wounds and reported injuries to a dozen police officers, Brig. Gen. Narciso Cabrera blamed the demonstrators for starting the trouble. According to the Manila western district police superintendent, a handful of demonstrators attacked a lone motorcycle cop watching the demonstration.

time, they get nervous when the peasants come to town. They believe it is a way of infiltrating NPAs into the city."

Military authorities said as much in relation to the troubles in Iloilo, a city on Panay island in the middle part of the country. They claimed that the NPA used the cover of the Welgang Bayan, which began October 21, to infiltrate Armed Partisan Units into the city.

Bayan activists have most often been the targets of police or military aggression. The left-lead organization is perhaps the fastest-growing opposition group in the country,

**"The use of force is Marcos' way of telling the United States that he is still in control."**

especially outside Metro Manila. It unites labor unions affiliated with the KMU and peasant and farmer groups affiliated with the new Kilusang Magsasaka Pilipino or Philippine Peasant Movement (KMP) with student, professional and various political groups. Though open and legal, members of the banned Communist Party of the Philippines and its National Democratic Front are quite influential within Bayan.

"The government is afraid of the unit developing under Bayan," said that group's Metro Manila Chairman Firno Tripon, a businessman. "They are afraid of the unity developing between the workers and the peasants."

## Getting tough

Another factor many believe to be influencing the current violent trend are the relations between the U.S. and Marcos. The most recent violence erupted only a few days after Sen. Paul Laxalt, visiting as a special envoy of U.S. President Ronald Reagan, met with Marcos. Among the topics reportedly taken up at the secretive meeting was Escalante. Supposedly, the U.S. believes such incidents did nothing to improve the political situation in the direction of much desired stability.

"This use of force is Marcos' way of telling the U.S. that he is still in control here," said Bayan's Bautista.

Added an observer unaffiliated with any political group, "It may have been Marcos' way of saying, 'screw you' to the U.S. His way of saying stop meddling in what is none of your business."

Though this opinion is widely held, it is by no means unanimous. There are those who believe the U.S. is behind the regime's current get-tough posture.

"Things are getting tough, huh?" noted Nick Elman of the KMU's national directorate. "I think the U.S. has told Marcos to crack down on the movement."

For Bayan the attack on its activities and on its activists has presented new opportunities. People, including oppositionists who shied away from Bayan for its left-wing politics, have been forced to rally to in support. Hombono Adaza and Carlos Padillia, leaders of regional affiliates of the United Nationalist Democratic Organization (Unido), a conservative opposition alliance, joined the funeral march of one of the Manila victims as did members of organizations affiliated with the social democratic Bandila alliance. And even Salvador Laurel, Unido's president, visited the victims who were not killed in Philippine General Hospital. But more important to Bayan its leaders claim provincial people a strengthening their support for the organization.

"I've been to Escalante," said Lean Alejandro, the young secretary-general Bayan. "The people there have been awakened by the violence. They've been strengthened by it. Growth has resulted from the violence. It is up to us to turn people's anger and sorrow into concrete organizational gains."

**James B. Goodno is In These Times' respondent in the Philippines.**



policy of "maximum tolerance" should the anti-dictatorship militants continue with their aggressive demonstrations and regional general strikes. As far as activists and movement leaders are concerned, the policy of maximum tolerance has long been both a myth and a fig leaf. They said they would continue to pressure what they see as a dying regime.

"This policy is not maximum tolerance, but selected terrorism," said Jose V. Bautista, a director of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan or New Patriotic Alliance (Bayan). "The use of terror and violence against public protest has been a consistent regime policy since the imposition of martial law 13 years ago. But we must note the increase over the past few months.

The current trend might have gone un-

"The Escalante massacre was the worst such incident in the history of the country," said a staff worker at Task Force Detainees, a Roman Catholic human rights organization. "We use the word massacre whenever more than one unarmed person is killed, but this was one of those rare incidents that was a massacre in every sense of the word."

Though many individuals hardened by years of martial rule and political violence let the Escalante killings pass with barely a brief moment of concern or sorrow, it drew the attention of others to the fact of violence during demonstrations once again. According to Jose Castro of Bayan, that group has begun a study of state violence by compiling recent incidents.

"What is emerging has a systematic pattern," said Castro. "First they use the carrot

"These people have a propensity for violence," said Cabrera. "They became violent last Monday. If they commit acts of violence then we will react."

## Conflicting stories

Organizers of the peasant march saw things differently. They accused the military of planning to disrupt the march before it could proceed to the presidential palace. As evidence of government plotting, they produced two former convicts who admitted to joining the peasants' march from Bulacan province to Manila under orders of the Meycauan, Bulacan police chief.

"The police wanted to intimidate the peasants," said a member of the Forum for Rural Concerns, one group responsible for organizing the march. "Yet at the same



By William Gasperini

**A**FTER NICARAGUA DECLARED A state of emergency on October 15, newspapers across the U.S. ran editorials almost unanimously condemning the action. "They must have decided," read a *New York Times* editorial, "that they had nothing more to lose by revealing their true political colors."

The reaction was so sharp that Americans working in support of the Managua government asked President Daniel Ortega during an "open forum" in New York City what they could say to handle the barrage of criticism. Ortega headed the Nicaragua delegation attending the United Nations' 40th anniversary. In his cautious, methodical manner, he elaborated on the reasons why his government felt the decree was necessary, emphasizing repeatedly that Nicaragua is at war and the government decided the situation required strong measures.

"We knew that in the short run we would upset friends and provoke this reaction," he said. "But we remember Salvador Allende in Chile, who neglected to declare an emergency to handle the crisis in his country. Afterward there were many expressions of condolences and regret. We do not want to receive post-mortem condolences or allow the CIA to obtain their goal of destroying our government as they succeeded in Chile."

According to Ortega, the U.S.-backed *contra* war has entered a new phase, one with plans for urban sabotage and increasingly active collaboration between the *contras* and the opposition inside the country. The government has long expressed concern about this "internal front," and recalls the 1983 sabotage of oil tanks in Corinto and the 1984 mining of Nicaragua's harbors.

Other actions have occurred more recently and may have factored in the decision to declare the emergency. During a *contra* offensive near the northern town of Esteli in early August, *contra* forces used plastic explosives to blow holes in two key bridges, although they were unable to destroy the structures. And in June a 15-year-old boy in Esteli died when a grenade rigged to his front door exploded as he left for school. The major *contra* group FDN later apologized to his family over their clandestine radio, saying they had mistaken his house for that next door belonging to a state official. Another reason given for the measure is the strong position of government forces against the *contras* in the field, lending authorities to fear that an increase of internal sabotage will come in response.

### Third decree

The new state of emergency is the third declared since the 1979 revolution. Days after dictator Anastasio Somoza's overthrow, the new government withdrew certain rights from members of the defeated National Guard to speed investigation into their crimes. Then a comprehensive state of emergency was imposed in March 1982 as the *contra* war intensified, restricting freedom of assembly and instituting press censorship for articles dealing with military and economic matters.

As a concession to opponents and to allow for freer debate, the government rescinded the state of emergency in July 1984 for the election campaign, although some press restrictions remained in force. After the November 4 voting, the measures were not reimposed, although the war and economic situation did not change substantially.

The new emergency measure differs only slightly from the previous one, and does not include certain minor points contained in the earlier decree, such as the right to separate jail cells for suspected *contra* collaborators during investigations into their activities.

As under the old emergency, the new provisions have not overtly changed the lives of most Nicaraguans. Some opposition politicians doubted the government would strictly enforce the measures. In a



According to President Daniel Ortega, the U.S.-backed *contra* war has entered a new phase.

## NICARAGUA

# Ortega defends new state of emergency

sense, the new decree formalized powers that have long been in force, which give security officials wider leeway in conducting investigations. The image of huge police roundups in the new "crackdown" exists more in the minds of Americans than in Nicaragua.

During his New York visit, President Ortega emphasized that the emergency did not affect activities of political parties, who promptly opened up a fiery debate in the National Assembly to discuss the measures. The debate united the six opposition parties—ranging from the Communists to the Conservative Democrats—in opposition to the new measure. Although able to force concessions such as reinstatement of *habeas corpus* and judicial appeal for ordinary crimes, the opposition was unable to rescind the state of emergency after a vote in the legislature, where the Sandinistas hold 61 of the 96 seats.

The state of emergency also restricts organized labor groups, most allied to the far-left Communist and Socialist parties, who had been calling for 100 percent wage

increases the government says are unreasonable given the war-time economy. Wages have risen four times since January to keep pace with price increases, and the government maintains the demands made by these labor groups only have a destabilizing effect.

### Firm response

Responding to criticism, Nicaraguan officials make the analogy with U.S. emergency measures adopted during World War II, including rationing, restrictions on strikes and broader powers of investigation—which led to the round-up of thousands of Japanese-Americans.

"Under a war economy, the situation re-

## Argentina given a pass for siege while Nicaragua is criticized

"The action is dramatic, but then our society is dramatic." Thus spoke an Argentine scholar describing President Raul Alfonsín's recent decree of a state of emergency in the South American country.

Given the rise of right-wing violence in response to the continuing trial of ex-military dictators, Alfonsín declared the measure as a means of legally detaining bombing suspects. While Argentine political figures expressed concern, international reaction was favorable to this move aimed at "defending democracy, even if the measure was less than democratic," as the *New York Times* editorialized.

The editorial went on to say the action bore "no similarity to Nicaragua, where a Marxist-Leninist government decreed a state of siege so that it could shut down opposition political activity and protest."

Few deny the fact that Alfonsín needed to act strongly in an increasingly volatile situation. Yet while international opinion granted the Argentine president room to employ strong measures, the Nicaraguans received nothing but criticism, despite taking pains to demonstrate that the October

quires a firm response," Ortega said. He then asked his New York audience, "If a political group wants to hold a rally here they need a permit, don't they? I think the reason has to do with how to handle traffic. In Nicaragua, we have to deal with problems far more serious than the flow of traffic."

The emergency responds to the open campaign against the obligatory military draft that Ortega credits with helping "turn the tide" in the ongoing campaign against the *contras*. He said attempts at urging young people to resist military service seriously hamper the war effort.

In responding to this, the Managua government has once again come up against the Catholic Church hierarchy, which is now the strongest opposition force inside Nicaragua and is led by Cardinal Obando y Bravo. Authorities confiscated copies of a new Church publication, *Iglesia*, because they said the Church did not comply with a law requiring all publications be registered. When advised of this regulation, Church officials reportedly said the Church was above such rules.

Relations reached a new low after the military recruitment of six persons claiming to be seminary students in late August. The government questioned whether the draftees were in fact seminarians after they were found not studying in a seminary and had never been reported as such by the Church.

Although no one is legally exempt from the draft, the Church and government have an oral understanding about seminarians. Thus far the recruits remain in a northern military training camp, while five others detained in a separate incident have reportedly been returned to their diocese.

As with President Ortega's celebrated April trip to Moscow just after a U.S. House vote on further *contra* aid, the question of timing arose around the decree measure. Ortega responded that the reaction would have been far worse had the emergency been adopted upon his return to Nicaragua.

"I knew I could better explain the state of emergency here than after going back to Managua," Ortega said, capping a busy week that included his first face-to-face encounter with President Reagan at a reception for world leaders marking the UN's anniversary. And defend the measure he did, from an appearance on the *Donahue* show to the open forum session.

With President Reagan in his UN address then naming Nicaragua as one of five world "hotspots" for which he claims the Soviet Union bears responsibility, there were no signs of any change in U.S. policy toward Nicaragua. And despite the intense criticism, as Ortega headed back to Managua this continuing hostility seemed to strengthen his resolve over the need for the new emergency measures.

15 decree was not a state of "siege."

In Latin America this term traditionally applies to drastic measures for police control, such as in Chile, Guatemala and Argentina itself after the 1976 military coup, where the siege measure lasted nine years. The Sandinista government is careful to point out that the October 15 measure constitutes a state of "emergency," broadening official powers but stopping short of complete control implied under a state of "siege."

Whatever the term, the two cases bear comparison. Argentina is not at war and it is not under attack from a powerful external force. Yet its taking firm measures to deal with internal matters is understood in the need for strong moves to disprove "the image of democratic countries in Latin America as weak and military dictators as strong."

President Alfonsín thus sought to preserve his fragile democracy by declaring the state of siege. In the public eye, however, Nicaragua is not granted that right even as it struggles to resist now-overt attempts to overthrow its legally recognized government.

—W.G.



# AMERICA CHAI

By Pat Aufderheide

**S**O YOU COULDN'T CASH IN ON THE chance to buy a piece of the networks recently. Don't worry. You already are part-owner of an American TV channel—the United States Information Agency's (USIA) Worldnet.

Worldnet is a TV show that is beamed by satellite two hours a day at Europeans thirsty for a five-minute English lesson, a snatch of news from NASA about the wonders of space or perhaps a chance to chat with Secretary of State George Shultz.

For USIA Director Charles Wick—the

former Hollywood producer whose major credit was *Three Stooges and the Seven Dwarfs* and whose attempts to create a blacklist inaugurated his government career—it's a chance to use the most persuasive modern communications to tell the truth directly to the peoples of the world, conveniently bypassing Washington-based journalists on controversial policy issues at the same time.

It fits nicely with policy set by the National Security Council, which last year issued a directive ordering that "strategically targeted information and communications assistance to other countries" should be "an integral part of U.S. national security policy

and strategy." USIA's TV director, Alvin Snyder proudly says that Worldnet is "in line with the directive." More generally, it's in line with the administration's push for "public diplomacy," which many think is a not-so-nice way of saying "propaganda" with the latest communications technologies.

You might think of Worldnet as a video press service, its client the American people as brought to you by this administration. It was launched with a splash in the days following the Grenada invasion. At the time, USIA Director Wick was traveling in Europe and was infuriated by the media coverage. He set up an ad-hoc international teleconference, and the resulting favorable

publicity convinced him to start a regular news teleconference program called Worldnet.

"Just imagine what John Kennedy could have done with a service like this during the missile crisis," says Snyder. "Or if we'd had this during the KAL incident—we could have piped our message all over the world." After the KAL airliner was shot down by the Soviets, USIA staff prepared a videotape that then-UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, a strong booster of USIA's present policy emphasis, showed at the UN. The video display garnered worldwide publicity for the administration's anti-Soviet charges.

Over the months, Worldnet became a regular once or twice-a-week feature, with speakers such as Secretary of the Interior Donald Hodel, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Burt and USAID administrator M. Peter McPherson. The set-up was simple. Journalists in a region—Latin America, Africa, East Asia, the Mideast or Europe—were invited to American embassies. After watching a short documentary video introduction, they watched several speakers at a panel in USIA studios in Washington make presentations. Then, in rotation, journalists at the several embassies sharing a satellite feed would question the speakers over an audio hookup.

Perhaps Worldnet's most spectacular hookup came in December 1983, when President Reagan used it to talk with three astronauts, West German Premier Helmut Kohl and reporters in seven countries. Now Worldnet is going beyond embassy walls with its daily programming, three hours a week of which will be interactive on the pilot program's model.

In Europe (and soon, if the show is successful, in other regions of the globe) the show will also be carried on cable channels. Eventually, USIA plans to broadcast its TV shows directly into homes around the world through direct broadcast satellite. Don't expect action too soon, though. That blue-sky day awaits dismantling of governmental regulation of the airwaves in most countries.

USIA encourages any media outlet, private or public, to lift and recycle any part of Worldnet, free of charge. USIA makes

## The United States' public relations service

The United States Information Agency (USIA), charged 32 years ago with the mission of "telling America's story to the world," has found favor with an administration that has been tough on line items for public broadcasting at home. Congress has bowed to enough Reagan requests for USIA to double the agency's budget since 1979—with a whopping 20 percent increase from 1984, bringing the bill to \$796.4 million.

USIA has always walked a fine line between delivering information and practicing propaganda. Recently, to the chagrin of many veteran staffers, its mission has been brought squarely in line with the administration's priorities in world affairs: the battle for the hearts, minds and governments on an East-West axis.

At an appropriations hearing for USIA, you might think you'd strayed into Defense Department territory. Officials point with alarm to the Soviet Union's funding of more exchange students from Central America than the U.S., and to the fact that Radio Moscow provides as many hours of programming as the USIA's Voice of America. (Never mind that Radio Moscow's prestige internationally is in the pits, while worldwide people tune in to the BBC's evenhanded world service.)

The agency has become more openly

partisan, with political "non-career" appointments increasing between three and 10 times, depending on how you count, since the Carter administration. Its advisory board is now headed by the conservative Heritage Foundation's Edwin Feulner.

The change has alarmed more than just the old-guard staffers. University of California media professor Ben Bagdikian reported in *Worldnet* magazine last year that "not since the devastation of Sen. Joseph McCarthy in the late '40s and early '50s has the agency come in for such a storm of criticism." He concurs with the critics: "USIA and the Voice [of America] are now mobilized for narrow, short-term polemics. The agency is run by Cold Warriors."

To USIA Director Charles Wick, however, that's merely a backhanded compliment. After all, it was his idea to pit USIA against Soviet propaganda machines, with a "Project Truth" staff whose job is to rebut Soviet-sponsored information now integrated into USIA's general operations. And in the battle, broadcast media have been his tool of choice. Television has been given a branch of its own, and its budget has mushroomed. This year Worldnet's portion of the bill alone comes to \$37 million, with hidden costs in staff time and consultant and service fees sprin-

kled throughout the budget.

While television is Wick's favorite medium, he has also paid attention to other broadcast projects. A huge portion of USIA's burgeoning budget has gone to upgrade transmission facilities at the Voice of America, 80 percent of whose transmitters are more than 15 years old.

Along with technical revamping has gone a sharpened message. Most branches of the Voice now carry pointed political editorials, that contrast sharply with news coverage. And then there is Radio Marti, Voice of America's special daily program running an \$11 million-a-year price tag to bring news to Cubans already bombarded with commercial radio signals from the U.S. The Radio Marti project, a favorite of the Cuban-American community, was so widely perceived as uncut propaganda that it was stalled for two years before Wick's administration finally pushed it onto the air.

It was Worldnet that was to justify USIA's new and heavy emphasis on television in its budgetary mix, and elevate television to its "primary delivery vehicle," in the words of one USIA spokesman. But it has been an inauspicious, if bravura, entry into the global village of video for America's public relations service.

-P.A.



# IN THESE TIMES NINTH

## A N N I V E R S A R Y



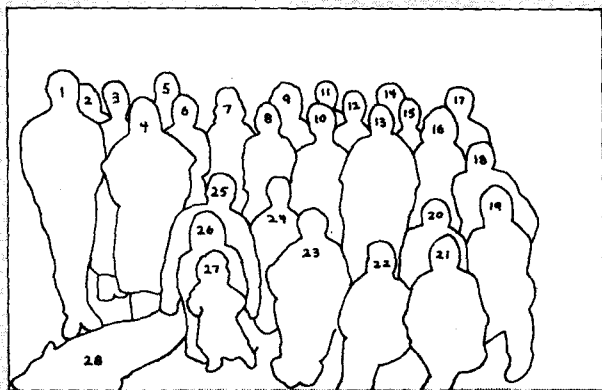
Paul Comstock

Sometimes it is difficult to believe that *In These Times* has survived and grown through nine of the most conservative years of this century. But despite the almost total absence of a left—not to speak of a socialist left—in the political life of our nation, we have survived and we are growing more rapidly now than in the past three or four years. We expect to pass the 30,000 mark early in 1986, and we hope to stay in that range for most of next year.

This is an accomplishment that would have been impossible without the continuous support, financial, promotional and moral, of our readers and of a wide range of organizations in every area of social and political action. This section of greetings is a manifestation of that support as we enter the last year of our first decade of publication. The entire staff is grateful for the ads. We hope we will merit the continued support of our readers in the years ahead.

*James Weinstein*

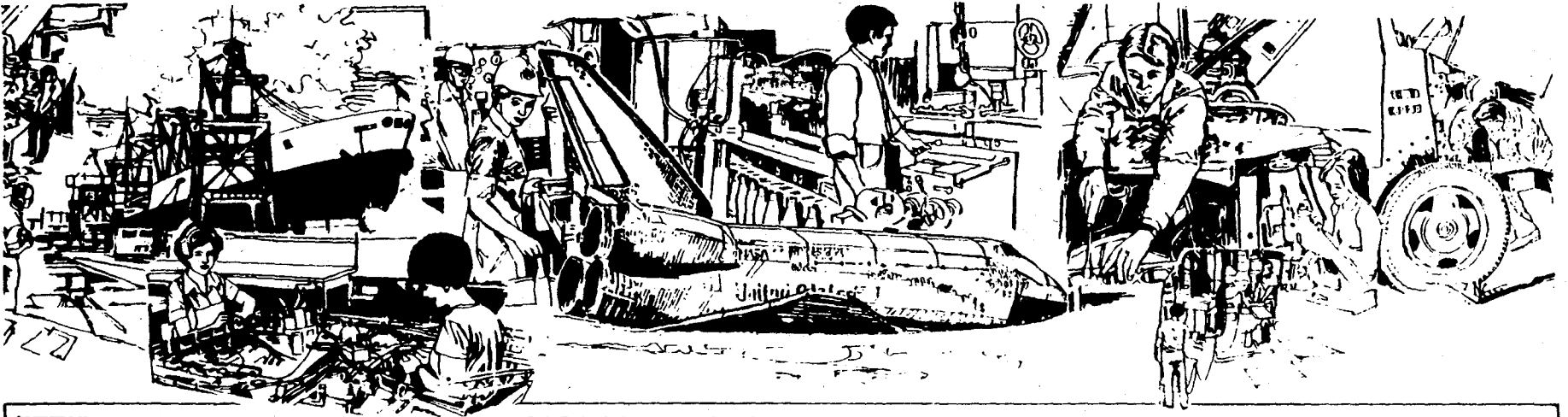
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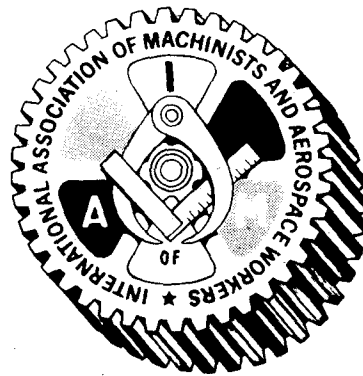




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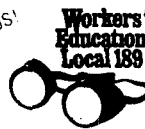
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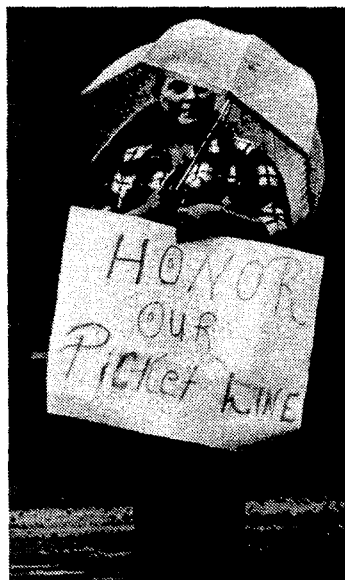
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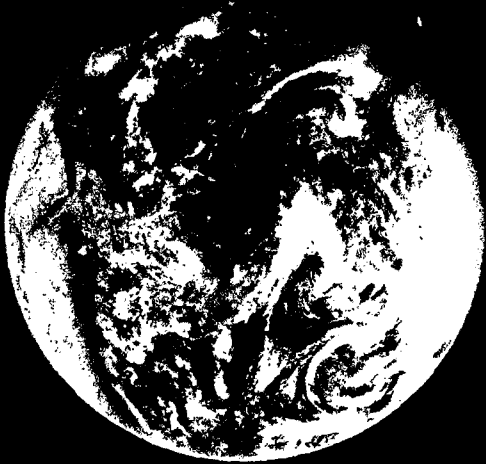


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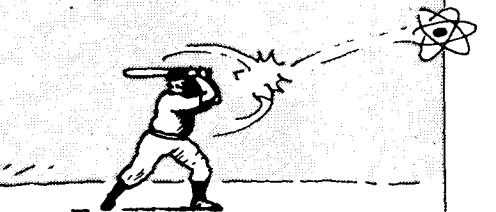
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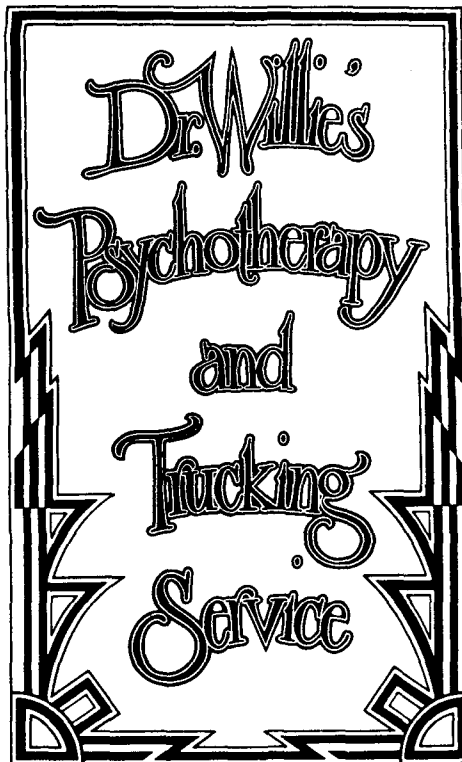
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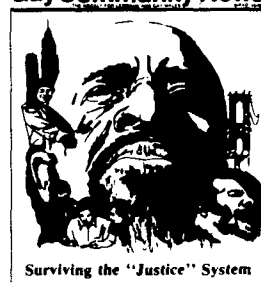
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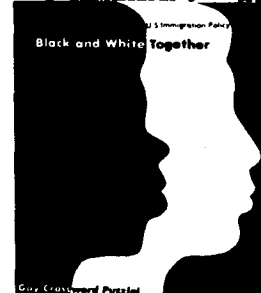
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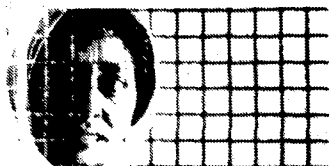
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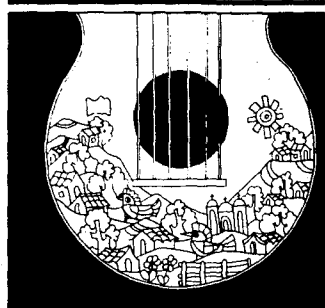
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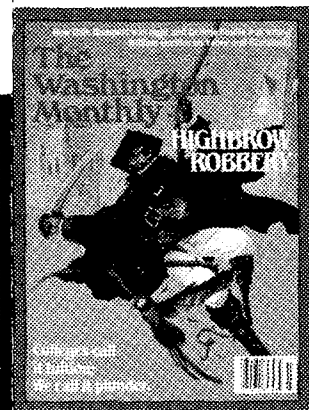
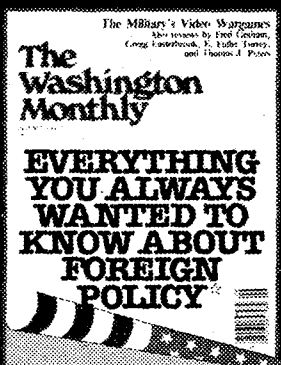
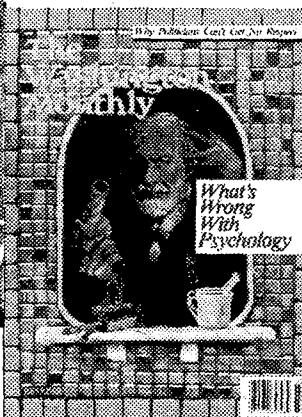
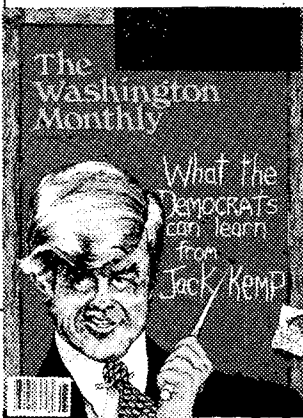
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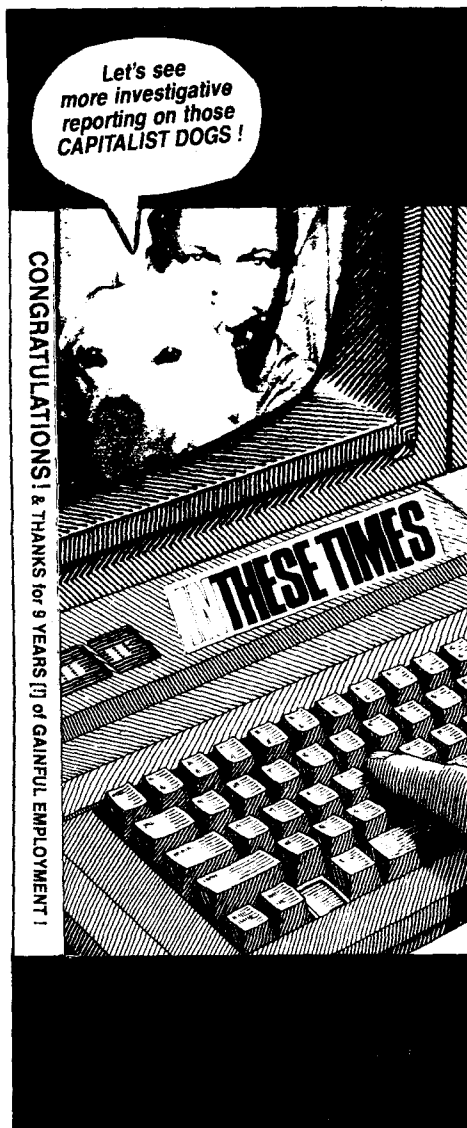


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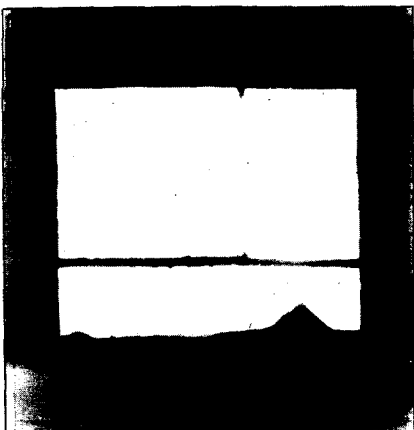
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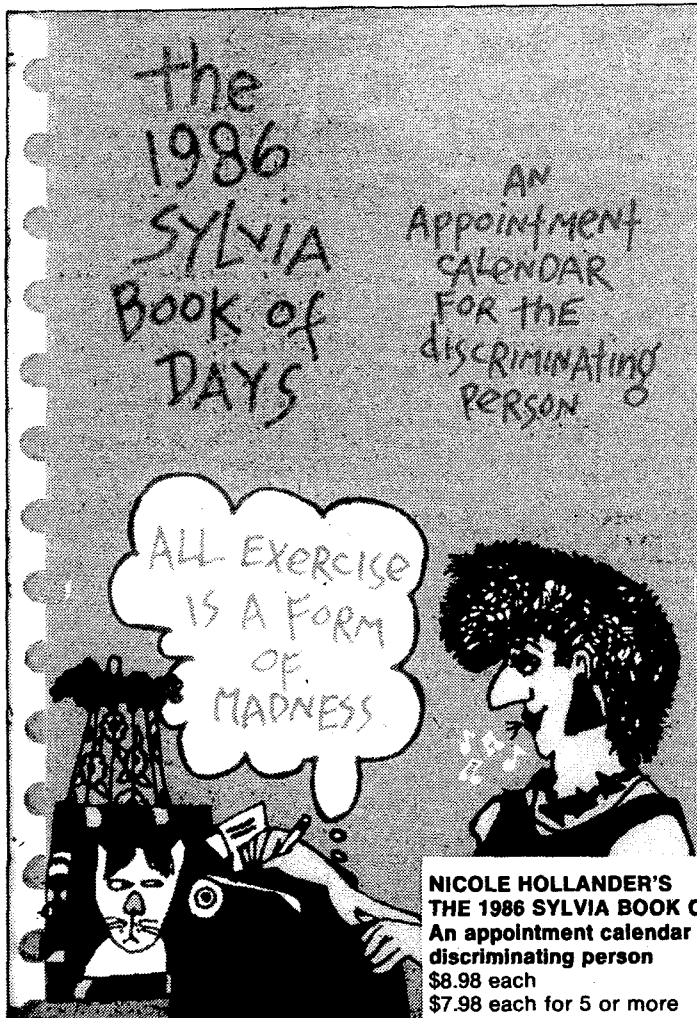
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# WORLDNET

no reference to the origin of the service on its Worldnet channel, thus making it easy on those uncomfortable with government-sponsored news to lift the information.

But the Worldnet pilot project has encountered objections that the show is too heavy on administration hype. Only a handful of Democrats have appeared on the interactive sessions, and panelists present a solid front—no point-counterpoint on this show.

Snyder explains: "Worldnet has been the vehicle to explain foreign policy abroad, and that's who's been on—the people who can explain it. They are, most often, administration people." To close watchers in the press corps, however, the set-up smacks of manipulation.

Take the case of Assistant Secretary of State Langhorne Motley, who appeared on

**Worldnet "serves an already overwhelmingly powerful propaganda machine. It does little for the truth."**

Worldnet several times last year, each time beaming out to a different region of the world with the administration's justification for its Central America policy. The London *Guardian's* Jonathan Steele dissected the European session. Motley, he argued, had delivered the "U.S. propaganda line on Central America" without challenge, and had in an interactive to Latin America spouted blatant lies, including the statement that Nicaraguan elections had only included Sandinista candidates. Limitations on follow-up questions had permitted such errors to go unchallenged until later sessions, with a different group of people.

To call Worldnet "interactive," he said,

was an unfunny joke, since questions were rationed, embassy staffers had control of the microphones and journalists had no eye-contact with panelists. And he was not alone. Worldwide, journalists attending Worldnet sessions have complained that Worldnet's "open dialog" has the disadvantage of a press conference without advantages such as that of getting a consistent theme in the questioning.

Worldnet, Steele had concluded, "serves the cause of an already overwhelmingly powerful propaganda machine. It does little for the truth." It may even do little for propaganda, if the show's record so far is any guide.

#### Ham-handed p.r.

Production is technically uneven and has a dowdy, official look when produced in-house. Documentary spots have had a partisan or jingoistic edge. Leading into a panel on Afghanistan, for example, was a short documentary featuring stock footage of refugee camps, backed by maudlin narrative using phrases such as "the terror that was their home" and "that flame of freedom that burns in the refugees." Another, a paean to inaugural festivities as an American mass ritual of democracy, looked like a hometown TV station's Fourth of July feature.

One Worldnet session featuring Undersecretary for Commerce Donna Tuttle frankly put pro-America promotion up front. Tuttle, flanked by an ad-man and marketer, spent her hour with the international press proudly debuting an American government ad campaign designed to attract foreign tourists. Cantankerous journalists in France and Germany responded with criticism of the ad's quality, questions about the strong dollar and demands to know why, if the U.S. was gung-ho to promote tourism, Tuttle's budget had only that morning been axed by the administration. She had no newsworthy answers for the restless international press.

It's that kind of experience that has dampened initial enthusiasm for Worldnet among major international media. Leading news providers such as England's ITN, the BBC and *Le Monde* only occasionally use the service, although it originally targeted

Europe's "successor generation" for top priority. Small independent or conservative media, as well as government-controlled channels and publications in the Third World, use it more frequently.

Washington, D.C., correspondents, at first alarmed at the notion of having their access to newsmakers pre-empted, now barely go out of their way to disparage it. ITN Washington correspondent John Snow says, "the technique [interactive video] is hardly new, and the format would never make it on American TV; European TV is at least as sophisticated."

At Agence France-Presse, Claude Moissy says, "AFP practically never uses it, because what is said is what U.S. officials say almost every day anyway."

At *Le Monde*, Bernard Guetta professes to be bemused: "Maybe they [the administration] think it's easier to speak to people who don't know what's going on here. And maybe it's good for a small news outlet. But I should think their target would be the influential media."

#### Soft sell

Last spring Worldnet finally put front-page news on the back burner, instead experimenting with interactive sessions featuring non-political celebrities. Several sessions with medical authorities won pickups around the globe, with sessions on the artificial heart a ratings success. Twice Doctors Robert Jarvik and William DeVries discussed breakthroughs in artificial heart technology, once to Asian embassy link-ups and once to Europe. In Singapore, Hong Kong and Bangkok, millions of viewers watched segments from the session.

Even in Europe's competitive news market, Jarvik and DeVries made prime time. In France some 29 million viewers, some watching the top-line TF-1, saw segments of the program. Yet coverage was not all upbeat. For example, independent French daily newspaper *Le Soir* noted, "It is well known that Dr. DeVries' operations, at least the latest one, are used by the hospital chain that employs him as blatant advertising."

Worldnet's daily program has proceeded in the direction of entertainment and soft features, some of them produced commer-

cially. Berlitz' delivers the five-minute English lessons, for example, taking the free advertising in trade. Earlier USIA TV ventures have succeeded with soft news. Its "Satellite File" is a half-hour package of features featuring medical and scientific breakthroughs, human interest stories and crime control; the service often picked up by commercial stations in other countries, without attribution. "Satellite File" now provides news bits for Worldnet's opening half-hour, "America Today." Other segments on the channel lure foreign media to present America in a positive light with segments on music, economics and sports.

This version of Worldnet is a far cry, however, from Charles Wick's original vision. He had hoped it would be a hardhitting information weapon against the menace of Communism. (See sidebar.) His crusade to counter Soviet disinformation had provided ideological fuel to revamp all of USIA's broadcast services.

As he once told his tape recorder, "My own view is that, as one Southeast Asian leader remarked, 'The Communists know how to use our media better than we do.'" Worldnet was supposed to combine hi-tech glitter with open journalistic access to major figures. Snyder's enthusiasm for Worldnet's interactives, in fact, comes from his belief that "it gives us a forum that is hard for the Soviets to emulate."

Not quite. The Soviets recently set up a "telebridge"—a Worldnet-like teleconference with a San Francisco audience, focusing on the Geneva arms talks.

Still, of anyone in the international audience, the Soviets may be the most impressed with Worldnet. Wick's counterpart in the Soviet Union, for instance, Leonid Zamyatin, claims that Worldnet slanders Soviet reality. A newsweekly in Soviet satellite Bulgaria trumpeted its dangers as "global TV psychological warfare."

But while Worldnet and Wick plot trajectories to the living rooms of foreign lands via satellite, their assault on anti-American attitudes may be aimed at the wrong enemy. In more than 90 countries around the world, it's not Soviet disinformation that prompts people to gather around the tube, but *Dallas*. ■



## EDITORIAL

As the United States and the Soviet Union move toward the summit meeting between President Reagan and Soviet Premier Gorbachov, both sides are jockeying for position and for a public relations advantage. But underneath the rhetoric, the charges and countercharges, two positions are clearly emerging.

The Soviets see this meeting as an opportunity to limit or stop the arms race, especially the escalation of resource drain that the Reagan Star Wars entails, while the United States might be open to limiting further massive investments in arms, but only if it can get the Soviets to agree to stop being a source of support of various anti-colonial movements around the world.

Reagan made this point in his own ideological way at the United Nations on October 24. "All of these conflicts, some of them under way for a decade, originate in local disputes," he admitted. "But they share a common characteristic: they are the consequence of an ideology imposed from without, dividing nations and creating regimes that are, almost from the day they take power, at war with their own people."

"And in each case," he added, "Marxism-Leninism's war with the people becomes war with their neighbors."

During the past decade, Reagan continued, "these wars played a large role in building suspicions and tensions in my country over the purpose of Soviet policy." He then went on to propose that the Soviets take responsibility for ending not only the war in Afghanistan, which they could easily do, but also the fighting in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Angola and Nicaragua.

Reagan's remarks were a somewhat more rhetorical and ideological restatement of a point made earlier in a *Foreign Affairs* article by Secretary of State George Shultz. "We must never let ourselves be so wedded to improving relations with the Soviets," Shultz wrote, "that we turn a blind eye to actions that undermine the very foundation of stable relations." It's



HE SAYS HE WON'T DEBATE STAR WARS BUT HE'S WILLING TO DISCUSS RETURN OF THE JEDI AND EMPIRE STRIKES BACK.

## Underlying issue in the upcoming summit

hard to imagine that anyone would have accused this administration of being so wedded, but just to make sure, he added that "as a practical matter, we can best deter or undo Soviet geopolitical encroachments by helping, in one way or another, those who are resisting directly on the ground."

Stripped of the rhetoric, Reagan and Shultz are saying that their primary concern is the maintenance of (mostly) American corporate hegemony over the peoples of the Third World. It is not stability *per se* that the administration seeks, but open access for investment and markets for our corporate rulers. In this, political ideology—as long as it is only that—makes

little difference. That is why Shultz, in one paragraph of his *Foreign Affairs* piece, could equally extol over South Korea's "spectacular economic success story" and extol "China's long march to the market" as "a truly historic event." The administration's hope is that the Soviets will so badly need an end to arms escalation—in order to be able to carry through the economic reforms that Gorbachov is embarked upon—that they will be willing to join hands in stifling movements in the Third World for genuine independence and national sovereignty.

It seems unlikely that the Soviets could be induced to make such a deal, not because they might not be sorely tempted, but because they can read the historical trends in the world better than Reagan and his right wing ideologues. The Soviets

*Stable relations, per se are not what the administration is seeking at the summit meeting. They want Soviet help in pacification.*

know that they had nothing to do with the success of the Cuban revolution until after Fidel Castro had established himself in power, and that they—or even their Cuban "surrogate"—have had little to do with the success of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua or with the revolution-in-progress in El Salvador. And even the Reagan administration has found it necessary to admit that the current revolution-in-progress in the Philippines is being fought with no material support from the Soviet Union or China. As Steve Lohr wrote in the *New York Times Magazine*, (Nov. 3) it is not unusual in the Philippines today to hear lawyers and even corporate executives admit privately that they are sympathizers of the New People's Army because they regard it as "the only real alternative."

In these circumstances the only thing the Soviets could do to help out the administration in its neocolonialism would be to refuse aid to revolutionary regimes once they have gained power. This would allow the Reaganites to move in and overthrow them more easily than they can now. But it is the right of any sovereign nation to seek aid wherever it can, or to give aid to any other nation it chooses to support. For the Soviet Union to renounce that right would put it in an untenable position internationally.

Given all this, it does not seem likely that much more will be accomplished at the summit than some cosmetic agreements.

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## International arrogance

"As the oldest nation of the New World, as the first anticolonial power," President Reagan told the United Nations three weeks ago, the United States has "always supported the right of the people of each nation to define their own destinies." And, indeed, this view has always been upheld as a principle by democratic people in the United States. But while this principle has always been espoused in the rhetoric of our politicians and in the editorials of our commercial media, the United States has in recent decades become the most arrogant of nations when it comes to respecting the sovereign rights of others, even our allies.

We have criticized the Reagan administration's total disregard for the sovereign rights of tiny "enemy" nations like Grenada and Nicaragua time and again, but events of the last month or two have pointed up just how ubiquitous this self-righteous arrogance is among the leaders of our nation even when our allies are involved. The universally applauded hijacking of an Egyptian airliner carrying the Palestinian hijackers of the *Achille Lauro* was one example.

That paled beside the armed confrontation on Italian soil when American armed forces attempted to seize these men from their Italian captors and then tailed an Italian commercial jet carrying them to prison. A shootout between the Italian police and the American army was avoided only at the last minute on direct

orders from the White House.

American conservatives and liberals have long considered it legitimate to undermine or, clandestinely, overthrow socialist-leaning governments in the Third World. At times, even subservient regimes have been overthrown with CIA assistance if they were deemed hopelessly inept at preserving a healthy climate for American corporate investment. But it has been rare indeed, that a "responsible" public figure would presume publicly to advise the head of state of one of our most loyal servants that it was time for him to step down.

Yet that is exactly what Sen. Dave Durenberger (R-MN), chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, suggested to Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos on November 1. Of course, the senator appeared to be speaking only for himself. His colleague, Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-NV), who had just returned from a visit to Marcos, said he had made no such suggestion. Even so, Laxalt implied, this was only because President Reagan had "a soft spot" for that lovable little butcher. Marcos is his kind of guy.

All of this has come to be routine under Reagan. Unfortunately, so, too, has the acceptance without public notice or protest of this state of things. We have become a society increasingly indifferent to the daily contradiction between our enunciated principles and the actions of our leaders across the political spectrum.



## PERSPECTIVE

## Countering racism in Israel

By Eric Lee

**T**HE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT has undergone a fundamental change that has been largely unnoticed by both the left and the right. The roadblock to peace at present is the Israeli government. The left believes this is not new. The right denies it is true. Both are wrong.

The reality of the Arab-Israeli conflict was that for three decades the Arab states refused to negotiate with or recognize the State of Israel. In 1977 Egypt's Anwar Sadat blew that reality apart, and in 1985, with the Hussein-Arafat peace initiative, the ball was thrown into Israel's court. Israel is now called upon to bargain and to make concessions.

But Israel's internal political machinery is not working in that direction. Parties prepared for compromise with the Palestinians hold only about one-sixth of the Knesset seats. The Labor Party, divided on the subject, is officially committed to no negotiations with the PLO and to no Palestinian state.

To move Israel in the direction of compromise requires a massive shift of public opinion. Israelis are tired and frustrated after a decade of conflict with the Arabs, and, although the strength of extreme racist parties like Meir Kahane's "Kach" has been exaggerated, racism has been on the rise, especially among Jewish youth.

The problem of Jewish racism has become so obvious an obstacle to the peace process that "Peace Now" has decided to devote its energies to combating racism. Left parties like Mapam and the Citizens Rights Movement are also focusing increasingly on the Jewish-Arab question within Israel. They believe that the peace process can resume only if Israeli public opinion is turned in an anti-racist direction. But public opinion surveys consistently show that "Peace Now" and its allies speak for only about one-fourth of the Israeli public. They are weakest among youth and among Sephardic Jews. And the left parties are even weaker.

That leaves only one institution in Israel powerful and broad-based enough to carry on the struggle against racism and to turn public opinion around—the Histadrut, the General Federation of Labor.

## A new factor

The Histadrut is rarely mentioned in discussions of the Middle East conflict because until now it has been quiet. The Histadrut's road to an anti-racist position has been long and difficult. Its beginnings go back to the very first days of modern Jewish settlement in Palestine, to the period after the end of World War I.

In 1919, the year before the Histadrut was founded, the Union of Railway, Post and Telegraph Workers—the first Jewish-Arab joint trade union—was launched and published newspapers in both Hebrew and Arabic. (The Arabic newspaper continued publishing until 1932.)

At its second convention in 1923, the Histadrut called for formation of two autonomous trade union federations, Jewish and Arab, to be united in an "International Association of Palestinian Workers." The "International Association" never came into being, but early steps included the opening of the first Histadrut clubhouse for Arab workers in Haifa in 1925. That same year the Histadrut in Jerusalem launched the first Palestinian Arab labor newspaper—called *Workers' Unity*. An Arab Department of the Central Committee of the Histadrut was founded at the same time.



Ultra-right leader and agitator Meir Kahane

*With anti-Arab racism on the rise, especially among youth, the labor federation Histadrut is the only major institution in Israel with the will and ability to seek Arab-Jewish accord.*

At its third convention in 1927, the Histadrut launched the Alliance of Palestinian Workers, a federation based on the Histadrut for Arab workers. It formed branches in the major Arab cities in Palestine. In 1937 the Alliance began publishing its own illustrated weekly, *Hakikat al Amar*, which continued until 1960. The Alliance grew steadily and obtained international recognition.

After Israeli independence in 1948, the Histadrut took further steps to integrate Arab workers into its ranks. In 1952 the Alliance was disbanded and Arabs joined the Histadrut as members. In 1953, a special section for Arabs was established in the Histadrut's Trade Union Department. Six years later, Arabs became full members of the Histadrut.

The increasing involvement of Arabs in the Histadrut brought in its wake the increasing involvement of the Histadrut in Arab life. Arab Histadrut membership reached 10,000 in 1958 (including housewives who were organized by the Working Womens Council). Ten years later the figure reached 50,000. By 1977, over a quarter million Arabs—46.6 percent of the total Arab population of Israel—had joined the Histadrut.

The Histadrut's formal commitment to Jewish-Arab equality and unity has grown throughout the years. It has consistently demanded single collective bargaining agreements for Jewish and Arab workers. It

is committed to the industrialization and modernization of the Arab villages in Israel. It has asked the government repeatedly for the right to organize Arab workers in the West Bank. (They have successfully organized Arab workers in Jerusalem, which Israel annexed in 1967.)

But as the Histadrut moved in a non-racist direction, Israel was changing. In 1977, the right and racist Herut movement came to power with Menachem Begin at its head. In 1984, racist fanatic Meir Kahane won a seat in the Knesset (with little more than 1 percent of the vote). Blood was being spilled on both sides as the cycle of Arab terrorism and Israeli retaliation reached new heights in the Lebanon War and its aftermath.

Israel Kessar, general secretary of the Histadrut, sums up its stand: "The Histadrut, from its beginning, started from the belief that in the state of Israel, and before

that, in the land of Israel, Jews and Arabs will live together, that there is room enough for both peoples, without having one of them force its culture, its language or its tradition on the other."

Kessar stresses the regional significance of Jewish-Arab cooperation in the Histadrut. In a speech opening a Jewish-Arab Institute at the Histadrut's Beit Berl center in 1984, Kessar remarked: "Our Israeli-Arab comrades feel free to cooperate with our Jewish comrades inside the Histadrut as brothers. This constitutes a living example, both to those within Israel's borders and to those outside, among our neighbors who still hesitate; it teaches them that they have nothing to fear, that it is possible and desirable to live together."

In short, among the major institutions in Israeli life—the government, the army, the religious institutions—the Histadrut alone is committed to Jewish-Arab cooperation, and to economic and social progress for Israel's Arab population. But Histadrut is just now taking a halting, cautious first step by participating in the struggle against racist violence. In the town of Afula, scene of bloody attacks on Arabs following the murders of three Jewish civilians in July, it has taken a leading role in organizing protests against the racist violence.

To do this the Histadrut should begin implementing its promise to bring modern industry to the Arab towns and villages. One of the catastrophes of the 1948 war was the destruction of the Arab urban base in Israel. The Arab intelligentsia and proletariat fled and the peasants alone remained. The Arab population was transformed from a largely urban one to a largely rural one. The Histadrut is committed to rebuilding the Arab economic base.

The Histadrut should also bring Arab trade unionists into its leadership—both its trade union leadership and the leadership of its economic and social institutions. No one in Israel takes seriously the prospect of an Arab serving as general secretary of the Histadrut. It is time such an idea was taken seriously.

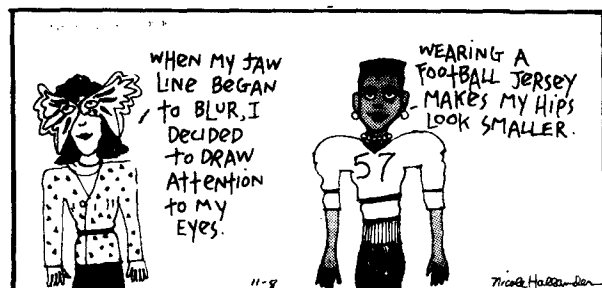
Finally, Kessar and the Histadrut should push harder for the right to organize West Bank workers into its ranks. The Histadrut doesn't support Israeli annexation of the West Bank (though its Likud faction does). The self-interest of Israeli workers, Jewish and Arab, in such a step is that it would raise the wages of West Bank workers, thus reducing wage-slashing and unemployment on the Israeli side. The long-run effects of such trade union organization are far-reaching. Similarly, Histadrut should step up its joint work with the Egyptian trade unions. The involvement of Histadrut, and especially of its Arab Department, in regional and social change, will be critical.

In the atmosphere of racist violence and fear that is spreading through Israel in the mid-1980s, the Histadrut remains the single institution that can effect change. It lacks the color of political parties or protest movements, but makes up for that with its power. Gradually, at a snail's pace, it is coming around to anti-racist activity—something that has become heretical in Israel today.

Eric Lee is a member of Kibbutz Ein Dor. He edits the democratic socialist quarterly *The New International Review*.

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander





## PERSPECTIVE



## Success of Reagan's irrational politics has intimidated us all

By Ronald Aronson & Steve Golin

**W**ITH WIDE OPEN EYES American voters in 1984—like Germans in 1933—chose the man whose policies point toward catastrophe. Although they could have chosen a conservative politician of traditional values, they opted instead for the politics of regression: the reassertion, against the grain of history, of previously abandoned or defeated forms of racial, sexual and economic privilege, anti-Communism, nuclear escalation and imperialism. They did so for the same reason other societies have turned to irrational and magical politics in the 20th century: in order to resolve, while avoiding radical change, a social crisis that remains irresolvable within the existing political consensus and premises.

For two straight presidential elections, Democrats defending the established arrangements—conservatives in spite of their supporters or sentiments—have provided no answer to the crisis. Twice, the terms of political debate have been defined by the reactionary, and the reactionary has won. In 1980, the left could pretend that people didn't know what they were voting for. After 1984, we no longer have that luxury.

For weeks after election day 1984 Reagan's victory was almost universally ascribed to his personality. People who opposed him on issues (like the nuclear freeze) were said to have voted for him over Mondale because of his bouyant, reassuring personality, his remarkable ability as "the great communicator."

Perhaps this is understandable as a rationale for minimizing defeat. But no matter how genial he is, we must recall that Reagan's landslide endorsement came after four years of regression on civil rights, attacks on programs for the poor, neo-colonialist and anti-Communist resurgence, nuclear escalation and government interventionism on behalf of the wealthy. And all of this finds its philosophical justification in a set of core beliefs that are inseparable from Reagan's personality.

Voters re-elected the man who proposed, with total conviction, the obscenity known as "Star Wars"—a proposal that reflects the same qualities as the man—naive worship of technology as a solution to problems, denial of discomfiting realities, simplistic righteousness, an Orwellian equation of war and peace. Whether or not people voted for Star Wars as such, they certainly voted for this approach to reality, perfectly incarnated in Reagan's character.

Indeed, it is difficult to imagine

Reaganism—this coherent domestic and international, ideological and social, political and economic offensive we live under—without the man's personality. But was Nazism any less separable from Adolf Hitler's personality or Stalinism from Joseph Stalin's. Even the New Deal, the last great movement of similar force and scope in this country, was inseparable from Franklin D. Roosevelt's personality.

### Reactionary character

Of course, to point to Reagan's ascendancy does not prove its danger. The comparison with 1933 may still seem wild. And, indeed, those among us who warn against fascism misread the current situation. They have been waiting for ranting men in paramilitary uniforms, not a genial movie star in a business suit. For years they have been warning of an abridgement of civil liberties, not a continuing climate of—more or less—free expression, alongside an attack upon the poor and increasing intervention overseas.

But Reaganism's real danger lies in its irrationality—a danger inseparable from its reactionary character. We knew years ago that Reagan was a reactionary. This is why many on the left regarded him with horrified amusement or amused horror—before we realized that people could take him seriously.

We were amused because his goal was

to return the country to the past. We knew that history could not be reversed. Yet we also knew that the world's great reactionaries have all contained an explosive component of irrationality within their personalities, movements and politics.

Like so many Germans during the '30s, we tend to forget this as we see Reagan temporarily successful—reversing the course of history and dismantling much of the fruit of past human struggles for dignity. Even the fact that in this sense the past becomes a daily presence, it cannot cancel out the potentially disastrous fact that it is imposed against the grain of history. Defeat in Vietnam did confirm the limits of American imperial power, just as the Soviet Union did achieve political-military parity with the U.S., signaled by detente. Sooner or later such realities will reassert themselves, and the bill will come due, not just for Reagan, but for all of us.

### Response to the crisis

What does it mean that Reagan dominates the American political scene on the level of political program, ideology and personality as has no president since Roosevelt?

Reaganism is the right-wing response to a crisis at a time when left-wing and conservative responses have lost all vitality. The real meaning of the '70s was that we had reached the end of several overlapping historical periods. One was technological domination, which was closely related to domination of women by men, and as old as Western civilization itself. Another, the process of populating a new continent and exploiting its resources, had made the New World seem different from the old for 300 years. Yet another historical period was defined by the New Deal consensus of limited welfare state based on constant economic growth. Finally, there was the post-war American domination of the globe—based on catchwords of the Free World and anti-Communism.

The idea of boundless economic growth and imperial domination reached its limit with defeat in Vietnam, the rise of Japanese and European economic competition, Soviet military equality, OPEC and the energy crisis and the rise of the environmental and feminist movements. By 1974, with the gas lines in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur war, it had become apparent that "American exceptionalism" had come to an end. We now had to live with the rest of the world, accepting our interdependence and our new limits. Limited resources and the carrying capacity of the planet spelled limits to growth just as surely as our defeat in Vietnam spelled limits to our imperial hegemony—it showed that, despite its technology, the U.S. could no longer simply impose its will on other people.

Similarly, the energy crisis and the "stagflation" of the late '70s showed that our resources and the carrying capacity of the planet spelled limits to economic growth.

For a moment it seemed that Jimmy Carter might adopt a forceful response to the impasse. He showed signs of humbler, more realistic foreign policy. Class struggle over redistribution of the shrinking pie was inevitable, but splits within the ruling class occur in such historical circumstances, and Carter was searching for a way to deal with an unprecedented situation. This was the period when Jerry Brown talked of diminished expectations, conservation, renewable energy, smaller cars.

Yet Carter's impotence in the face of the new realities was his only authentic contribution. After a few criticisms of huge oil profiteers, and early awareness of the need to conserve resources, Carter found the direction that would become Reaganism: deregulation and revival of the Cold War. The government would lead





class struggle against working people and the poor and displace it onto the traditional enemy, the Soviet Union.

Carter's fumblyings reflected the impasse of the old politics: the welfare state had been based on an ever-expanding pie, not on struggle to redivide existing wealth, and when the pie began to shrink the corporate liberals and their allies further to their left were paralyzed. Without its premise of economic expansion, corporate liberalism had nothing to say because it is incapable of questioning its own premise of privilege and power.

Yet without policy pointing to a different future, regression became attractive, as it often does when there is no way of going forward within the dominant assumptions. The old welfare-state politics were bankrupted by events, but a new policy could not develop within the prevailing assumptions. Instead, people followed Reagan back into the past. In voting for him, people did not vote for his attempts to destroy abortion rights, environmental protection and the Nicaraguan revolution, but for a magical and right-wing escape from American decline.

Why insist that Reaganism is irrational? Because its mission flies in the face of history. "Anything can be accomplished," Reagan says in a capitalist-technocratic counterpart of the Stalinist incantation that "there are no fortresses the Bolsheviks cannot storm."

Carter's or Mondale's inept realism makes them appear as prophets of gloom. In contrast, Reagan's crude simplicity communicates belief and mission. By reviving primitive myths of free enterprise and anti-Communism, Reaganism offers a magical hope—that of withdrawal from the present and return to the golden age of capitalism and imperialism. His self-

righteous ignorance is the only way to communicate hope within the framework of capitalism today: it requires willful denial to believe that the general welfare is served by self-aggrandizement that favors only the wealthy and powerful.

Reagan may be a brilliant politician, but we all know that he is also very ignorant. Yet few in public life—left or right—know what to make of this. And so, after nearly five years in office, we tend to forget or repress it until his newest inanity outrages our sense of truth. But Americans do not trust and respect him despite his ignorance, self-righteousness and crudeness. On the contrary, these are part and parcel of his effectiveness.

#### The danger of Reaganism

We would prefer to think that Reaganism, too, will pass, and the struggle will resume—just as many Germans in 1933 thought Nazism would pass. But we know too much about the madness of Reagan's nuclear escalation to be so optimistic. The

central reality of Reaganism involves adopting a deranged logic. It erects "sane" structures based on the effort to prepare for all eventualities, including the madness of the other side; it increases our insecurity—and our poverty—while claiming to do the opposite; and the whole system of weapons aims at the total destruction of the society it claims to protect.

But if the dangers of nuclear escalation are widely discussed on the left, much less has been said about the root disease making it possible: anti-Communism. Only anti-Communism, in its most irrational and virulent forms—which once again has become sophisticated common-sense—can justify threatening the world with destruction. It is the cement without which Reaganism would not hold together. Indeed, those on the left have too often become caught up in it themselves. Too often the manner of our own criticism of the Soviet Union cuts the ground from under our rejection of policies that oppress us.

*Reagan had far more courage than today's left. Years ago he and his supporters were willing to walk in the wilderness and wait until they could capture the Republican Party. They were less concerned with immediate success than with presenting their views with full conviction.*

To put it most simply, social change will be blocked both in the U.S. and the USSR so long as the Cold War projects class struggle onto the enemy who, in a distorted form, embodies the suppressed alternatives. Reagan hates the Soviet Union, not because of that society's obvious negative characteristics, so useful for propaganda, but above all insofar as it is anti-capitalist. In both countries social change is blocked because their societies are organized against the enemy. The rulers of each society aim their missiles at each other, but they need each other. The American missiles are really meant to control us.

We have reached a point in our history where the only policy that can provide an answer to the right is one of the left. Our first priority has to be to ensure that the world survives Reagan. His policies can destroy the world, and we must struggle against this possibility. We must remember that the common enemy of the American and Soviet peoples are the American and Soviet ruling classes. The current rulers of the U.S. cannot and will not make a real peace; only the American people can do that.

Yet, after five years of Reaganism, no one has even begun to develop an authentic response. The Democrats are in their deepest funk since before the New Deal, without leadership, program or even orientation toward key issues. Indeed, they are beginning to lose track of their constituency. Democrats are aping Reagan openly rather than addressing the social crisis from a different perspective. They are even denying that a crisis exists.

Something similar is happening to those on the left who are becoming more "realistic." More and more such people now concur that the country "needs a strong defense," as they give freer and freer vent to anti-Communism. The lesson of all this is not that the left is becoming more realistic, but that we, too, are becoming prisoners of Reaganism.

Today, when no one but the right has any coherent program, it is urgent that we act from what we know to be true. We should not try to revive the moribund politics of the New Deal. We have a different agenda: to reopen, from the point of view of those on the bottom, the real struggles at the heart of society. If some of us work within the Democratic Party, it should be to further a left agenda of revived class struggle and restricted growth.

This perspective will trouble many on the left, because it means being willing to walk in the wilderness until we can win the mainstream. This goes against the grain of much of what passes for left strategy, the main concern of which is to make ourselves acceptable to the Democratic Party establishment.

Reagan has far more courage. Years ago, he and his supporters were willing to walk in the wilderness and wait, no matter how long it took, until they could capture the Republican Party. They were less concerned with immediate success than with being correct and with presenting this in the full strength of their convictions. They had a mission. Reagan is "the great communicator" not because he mastered acting techniques, but because he believes what he is saying, and presents it with appropriate force and clarity. Can we imagine Gary Hart doing so?

The left needs to worry less about what will be popular and more about what we believe to be true. Then—unlike Mondale or Hart—we will be able to speak with persuasive conviction, because people will understand that we have a message.

Ronald Aronson teaches at Wayne State University and is the author of *Dialectics of Disaster: A Preface to Hope* (Verso/Schocken). Steve Golin teaches at Bloomfield College and is completing a history of the Paterson silk strike of 1913.



**The Nuclear Age**

Tim O'Brien

Knopf, 320 pp., \$16.95

**Back in the World**

Tobias Wolff

Ecco Press, 101 pp., \$12.50

**World's Fair**

E.L. Doctorow

Random House, 288 pp., \$17.95

By Alan Chuse

**R**EADERS—AND WRITERS—have become accustomed to the periodization of literature. Most of us take the Romantic Period, say, as something coterminous with the Atlantic Ocean or Greenland, a part of nature rather than a part of culture, like something we dreamed up to keep a hold on a large mass of somewhat similar poems and novels and essays.

The idea of generations has been almost as long, and it's really taken hold here in the U.S., where the constant flow of technological innovations seems to mark the passage of time—i.e., the MTV generation, the computer generation, the you-fill-in-the-blank generation—in much the same way as a particularly striking number of geese flying south marked a special winter for the old North American Plains Indians.

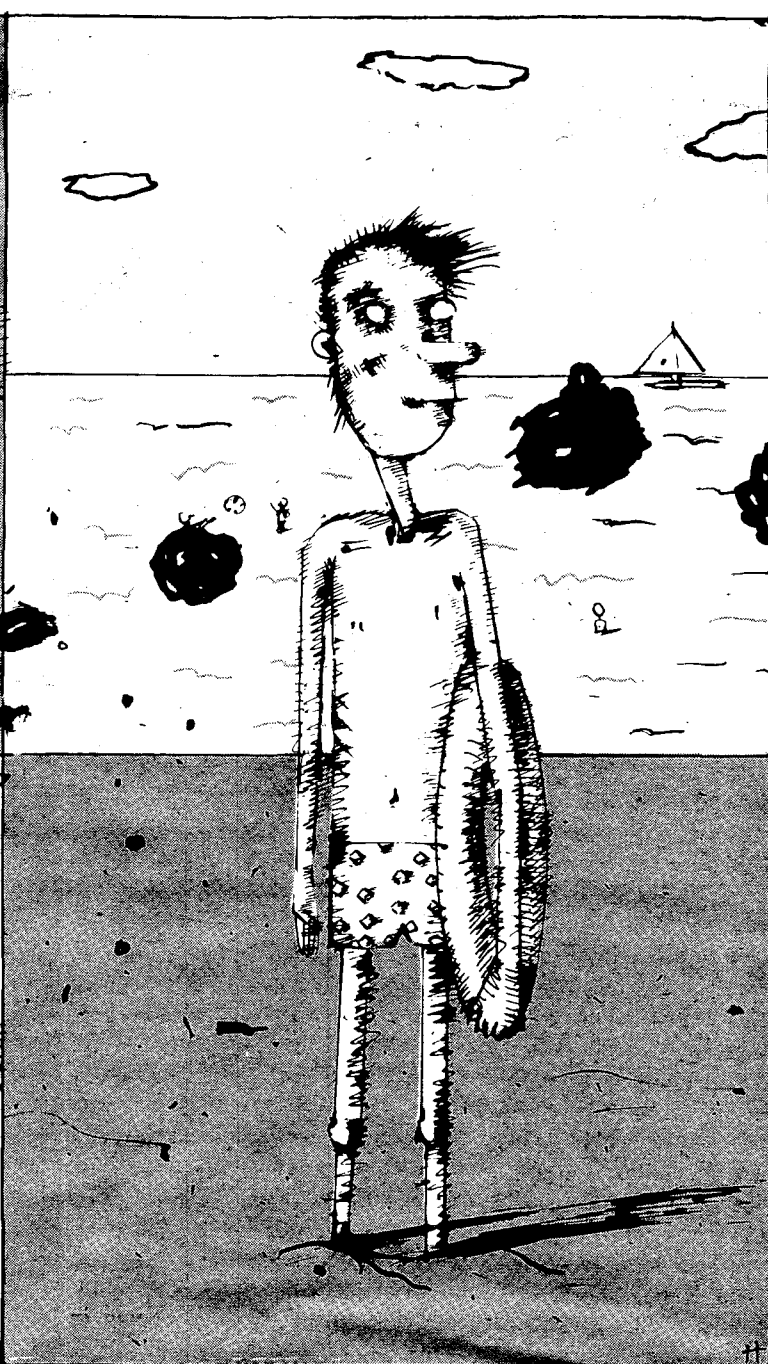
We Americans have also specialized in another way of grouping, that of ethnic marking, so that liberal critics, for whom red-lining mortgage bankers and realtors are heartless, cash-hungry social scum, think nothing's odd about turning modern American letters into a map of many ghettos—while ignoring regional distinctions, just about the only serious distinctions of this sort that a critic can make.

One of the newest methods for grouping is, of course, genderization, the separation of writers and writing into clots of supposedly homogeneous individuals, giving the American scene a somewhat nervously artificial air resembling something like my eighth grade after-school dance class in which the boys hovered near the chairs on one side of the room and the girls on the other.

Studying writers in narrow groups—gay writers, war novelists, women short story writers, nature poets—can produce some useful perspectives, though usually sociological rather than aesthetic. I've indulged in it myself from time to time. Occasionally it's the only way to get certain good writers the public notice they deserve. Now and then it puts up in the readers' minds second- and third-rate artists whose only true accomplishment is that they pay attention to a certain subject matter.

But there is one real drawback to this fitfully useful and thoroughly fashionable method of genderization.

Like the kind of criticism that announces its own importance at the expense of the art in question, it tends to obscure the most radical element in the making of verbal art in Western, middle-class society. This is the struggle of the individual artist, no matter what his or her gender or ethnic experience or age group or—even—region, to make formal sense out of the chaotic flow of events and the accidental nature of geography that we call life in the world. Any kind of paradigm that seems to so many thinking people genderization does tend to obscure—and by default devalue—any artists who fall outside



## FICTION

# America's psyche through a prism of time

its boundaries.

Which means that I felt it necessary to say all that I've just said in order to focus on three interesting and valuable new books of fiction by three white American males. In our current critical climate, three white guys sitting around writing aren't supposed to have all that much to say to the majority of American readers.

Wrong.

**The Nuclear Age**

Tim O'Brien's new novel, for example—to look at the first of these three books, each of which puts the spotlight on either our past, present or future, and in this case it's the future—attempts to give us a portrait in time of the first full generation. See, it's easier to hold your breath for 12 minutes than to avoid the by now long ago accepted paradigm of generationism—to grow up, as the cliché would have it, under the shadow of the Bomb.

William Cowling, O'Brien's narrator, tells his story in 1995, while digging a large hole in his Montana backyard, a hole he intends to use as a bomb shelter. Having been born in the days after Hiroshima and gone to school to be drilled in how to duck under your desk in case of atomic attack, Cowling finds himself nuke-haunted. And as he digs (toward China?) he digs back into his past and, in a series of what he calls "quantum jumps," bids us leap back into the old days and discover exactly what it was like to grow up in the nuclear epoch.

*There was a rumble, then a whine, then a shrill sucking sound. Far off, the earth's crust trembled; continental plates shifted in the night. The mountains above town, so solid and ancient, began to groan like the very deepest summer thunder. I held my breath. In the distance, a mile away, a trillion miles, I could hear the sizzle of a lighted fuse.... Then suddenly the sky was full of pigeons, millions, every pigeon on earth—screeches and wings and glowing eyes.... The planet tilted. Kansas was burning. Hot lava flowed down the streets of Chicago. It was all there, each detail: Manhattan sank into the sea, New Mexico flared up and vanished....*

Cowling's boyhood visions of a war unlike any other sounds through powerfully and effectively in passages such as this. The story of his parents' attempt to "civilize" him—an old American story—by reducing his fearful paranoia about Kansas going up in flames works just as effectively. So does Cowling's account of his radicalization at a Montana public college, where among other future Weatherpeople, he meets the then-cheerleader Sarah Strouch whose evolution from girl charmer to urban terrorist is a portrait to worry and wonder at.

After training in Cuba as a guerrilla fighter, Cowling himself evolves into an affect-less wimp of an alternative American, fearful of fighting, working as a courier for the Weather underground. He drifts into an emotion-less state in which only the brittle rhetoric of

the period—see, there I go again—serves to spark his otherwise listless state.

The late night CBS wrap-up showed Lester Maddox singing "God Bless America." In Sacramento, Ronald Reagan talked about the perfidious nature of the day's events, which gave "comfort and aid to the enemy," and in the nation's capital Barry Goldwater and Gerald Ford harmonized on the grand old themes....

*These are three valuable new books of fiction by three white American males who have a lot to say about what's happening in this country.*

Passages such as this tend to make the narrative sound shrill and hysterical. They detract from the long middle of the novel in which we witness Cowling's transformation from Weatherman to geologist. But eventually we reach the point where we see him digging that monstrous hole again, the tunnel into the past as opposed to the tunnel out of Vietnam that he used to such good effect in his prize-winning novel *Going After Cacciato*. And the metaphor catches our imagination again.

For several reasons, this is a novel that we ought to tell each other about. No one else has attempted to tell his story before in this particular way. O'Brien has written a daring book—and if at times it fails us even then we have to applaud the courage and audacity of the writer who took on this subject, this style.

**Back in the World**

Tobias Wolff, whose novella *The Barracks Thief* won the prestigious PEN/Faulkner award last spring, focuses on the present in *Back in the World*, his new collection of short stories, a present that stands as quite distinct from Cowling's surreal future but one that shares with O'Brien's hero a sense of political infusion into the psyche of the country.

The title, it seems, comes from the speech of a soldier named Hooper in a story called "Soldier's Joy." As he tries to talk a loaded rifle out of the hands of a very upset young recruit, Hooper explains that for him the best time of his life was during his tour of duty in Vietnam. "We didn't know it then," Hooper goes on to say. "We used to talk about how when we got back in the world we were going to do this and we were going to do that. Back in the world we were going to have it made. But ever since then it's been nothing



but confusion."

Several story writers, Grace Paley paramount among them, have dealt in this form using the materials of post-Vietnam American life. But none has worked so pointedly as Tobias Wolff in characterizing the peculiar flavor of this time. And Wolff's soldiers are only the most overt figures for whom the war has changed forever their special relation to the world of everyday life.

In "Leviathan" two young upwardly mobile couples celebrate a birthday with a snowstorm of cocaine and a haunting anecdote about a boat ride out into the Pacific in search of whales. In "The Rich Brother" a successful California businessman finds himself plagued by the failures of his younger, mystically-inclined brother and turns what might once have been a simple favor into a moral decision fraught with anxiety and despair.

"The Missing Person" takes a flawed priest to Las Vegas and the discovery of an odd vocation in a world without redemption. "Desert Breakdown 1968," perhaps the collection's best and most terrifying story, gives us a young veteran on the road in a broken-down used car with his German wife and child, and ready to abandon everything for a crazy shot at a job in the movies.

This landscape shimmers with mirage: women here are named Krystal and Hope; ghost towns offer the only respite from a searing desert heat; and success comes in the form of a hearse-full of assorted hippies racing faster and faster along the highway toward a destination quite obscure in the mountains.

Two hawks wheeled overhead, their shadows immense on the baking grey sand. A spinning funnel of dust moved across the road and disappeared behind a billboard. The billboard had a picture of Eugene McCarthy on it. McCarthy's hair was blowing around his head. He was grinning. The caption below said, "A Breath of Fresh Air." You could tell this was California because in Arizona a McCarthy billboard would last about five minutes. This one had bullet holes in it, but in Arizona someone would have burned it down or blown it up....

In this fashion Wolff evokes a landscape, a land, a time, a sense of life, however despairing—a truth about the way a lot of people have been living in this country since the war. It's no accident that most of his unsuccessful Americans live in the West, and in California, the land of opportunity within the land of opportunity, in particular.

About the only triumph most of these losers know is having their story told in such clear and often heart-wrenching forms as Tobias Wolff makes up for the material. Reading him on post-Vietnam America is like reading William Trevor on Ireland in its age of modern troubles. No other American writer appears to be writing realistic short stories with such good effect.

#### World's Fair

O'Brien in his new novel approaches the future from the past, Wolff in his stories zeroes in on the present from the perspective of the past. E.L. Doctorow, in his masterly new work of fiction, *World's Fair*, presents a narrator attempting to join his two selves, the boy that he once was and the man that he has become, in a mid-

dle-ground in which time takes on both an exotic but also familiar quality, a place of memory that appears to be the location of history as well.

"Edgar," born in the Bronx in 1931, is a kind of Proust of the "potsy" players, a Joyce of the Jews, with the Grand Concourse his Combray, New York his Dublin, the 1939 World's Fair his Araby. In fact, the book is a lyric manual on how to be a Jewish kid growing up in the special place that was New York City in the '30s. On the surface there is a vast amount of detail from this time, with all the proper names of candy bars and radio shows, comic books and chewing gum precisely correct and in place.

But the details are mere set decoration compared to the feeling of the time that Doctorow evokes, from his Edgar's earliest memories (in the spirit of Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*) of bed-wetting on through his education into the sensual world, the advent of school, his recognition of his parents' presence in his life, the role of friends, sex, food, entertainment, cash, technology and history in his young life. All of this is fixed in a remarkable style that seeks to capture all the innocence of discovery and all the intelligence of recollection into a single mode of discourse, as in this moment on the beach at Rockaway in 1936 when young Edgar comes to understand some things both harsh and beautiful about his being in the world.

*It seems to me now that in this elemental place, these packed public beaches in the brightest rawest light of day, I learned the enlightening fear of the planet. All over the beach men stood on their hands or climbed to other men's shoulders. Women of flesh slept ground into the sand. Beyond any name's recognition, under the shouting and teeming life of the world's public on their tribal Sunday of half nude ceremony, was some quiet revelation in me of unutterable life.*

*...And it all came to brilliant resolution as I whispered the word scumbag. It was as if all the sound had stopped: the voices, the ready cry of gulls, the sirens and the thunderous surf, for that one word to be articulated in the silence of my head. I felt through my fingers the sandpour of bones, like some futile archaeologist of a ground-up mineral past. I recognized the heat in the sand as some invisible power of distant light. And from the glittering blue water, I took its endless motion and unimaginably frigid depth. All of this astonishingly was: and I on my knees in my bodying perception, wordlessly primeval, at home, fearful, joyous.*

This intersection of feeling and nature, of individual life and historical force that pervades Doctorow's celebration of time and intelligence stands out as an experience tied to every special interest you can name: out of period and gender, region and ethnicity. And yet the novel refuses to be bound to any single individual paradigm, its language radiating an awareness beyond the power of words themselves, the sound of one white, middle-aged, middle-class, New York-bound American male speaking for more than a few people unlike himself. ■

*Alan Cheuse is a fiction writer and journalist currently in residence at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.*

## THE MILITARY



# The battlefield in our backyard

**Nuclear Battlefields: Global Links in the Arms Race**

By William M. Arkin and Richard W. Fieldhouse  
Ballinger, 352 pp., \$29.95

By Jonathan F. Saxton

**W**HETHER YOU ARE A novice seeking a readable overview of the nuclear weapons question, a scholar doing advanced research on the military or someone trying to understand more fully the nuclear system you are working against, *Nuclear Battlefields* is an essential resource.

Though the book's unfortunate cover, layout and title give the impression of a sixth-grade reader on

Armageddon designed for Moral Majority primary schools, this book certainly should not be judged by its cover. It is an extraordinary sourcebook of information on the vast but relatively obscure network of bases, radar installations, command, control, communications and intelligence sites (C3I), laboratories, storage facilities, naval ports and other elements that make up the global nuclear system.

William Arkin is director of nuclear weapons research at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C. Richard Fieldhouse, currently visiting researcher at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute in Sweden, was until recently his senior research associate. This is Arkin's fourth

*Many will be surprised to find that there is not a single state that does not host a part of the nuclear infrastructure. The military is virtually omniscient and omnivorous.*

IN THESE TIMES NOV. 13-19, 1985 19  
book in four years on the military system.

*Nuclear Battlefields* describes the daily flow of enormous amounts of information among thousands of bases, ships, aircraft, satellites, ground stations and military units. Training missions, human and technical intelligence gathering and joint military exercises prod and sometimes provoke the other's forces in a continuous and potentially catastrophic game of brinkmanship. All of this is designed to test the adversary's capabilities and intentions, while alternately proving and hiding one's own.

Thousands of the world's best scientists—oceanographers, seismologists, chemists, astronomers, meteorologists, geophysicists and others—work on communications intelligence, earth motion and hundreds of other problems related to the targeting of nuclear warheads, as well as on countless other problems related to the nuclear arsenal. Although the book is primarily focused on the American nuclear system, the nuclear systems of the Soviet Union, France, Britain and China are also described in their essentials. Five appendices provide the location and a description of every known nuclear related facility in each of the five major powers. The reader soon understands that the military is virtually omniscient and omnivorous: working everywhere, at all times, prodding, analyzing and devouring—making itself bigger, while making the rest of us smaller.

Many will be surprised to find that there is not a single state that does not host a part of the nuclear infrastructure. The total number of military facilities ranges from a low of nine in Vermont to a high of 361 in North Dakota. In the 50 states there are 14,599 deployed nuclear warheads and 4,115 military facilities of which 670 carry out nuclear related functions. The military's nuclear infrastructure is in virtually everyone's backyard.

#### Post attack

The book also details current and future military projects that will vastly extend the nuclear system. Not satisfied to prepare to fight a nuclear war, the Pentagon is now designing and constructing a whole new "post-attack" (post-nuclear war) system. One plan is for a Ground Wave Emergency Network (GWEN) of 300-500 hardened communications stations designed solely for the purpose of providing communications "endurance": a communications network to survive all-out nuclear war.

But the nuclear infrastructure does not stop at our nation's borders. Japan, despite its prohibition of nuclear weapons and materials from its territory, is the headquarters for the main American nuclear force for the entire northern and western Pacific: the U.S. Navy's Seventh Fleet. Vietnam is fast becoming the site of a series of Soviet nuclear support facilities. New Zealand, despite its status as a nuclear-free zone, is the site of an important Southern Hemisphere observatory operated by the U.S. Navy. Dozens of nations sponsor such military facilities, even though many of them are unaware of their connection to the nuclear system.

It becomes apparent in *Nuclear Battlefields* that the focus on the dangers of nuclear weapons themselves is not enough. The enormous and complex C3I network

*Continued on page 22*



By Lucy Lippard

**W**HEN WOMEN ARTISTS begin to call themselves terrorists, when they scar, deform or mutilate their images, it sounds as though the feminist art movement was running through a new cycle of rage. But this time around (post-punk), humor and irony and a certain aura of radical chic are tempering the tantrums.

Last spring, two street posters appeared everywhere in the New York art ghettos—plain, no-non-

trants at the door. Like Nancy Holt's visceral-industrial labyrinth of steam pipes, it should remain as a permanent part of the decor, breaking the male monopoly. Joan Semmel's eight-foot male nude hovered dramatically in the dark far

Jenny Holzer's "truism" text from *Guerrilla Girls* Palladium poster.

Story a.k.a. Martha Wilson) was in attendance, as was Bonnie Sherk's Miss Liberty, whose arm ached from waving her magic wand in vain. Spiderwoman Donna Henes appeared in a creation of plastic spiders and webs,

stitutional effect the GG has. So far, the art world masturbates in peace with little climax in sight, but the GG show, token though it was, offered a strong bid for attention, and got it. Heir to the pro-choice street performers No More Nice Girls in the early '80s, GG provides a link, if only a link, between the art world and the grassroots political activism of other feminist artists across the country. They are a classic mid-'80s phenomenon—mean, but fun, avoiding or mocking rhetoric, but not necessarily less aggressive than the founding mothers of the '60s and '70s, whose 1970 guerrilla actions at the Whitney Museum raised both consciousness and the ratio of women in the museum's Annual by 400 percent. GG's bark may be worse than its bite, but it is laying out the old issues and gaining new support. For better or worse, young women who might not call themselves feminists will call themselves Guerrilla Girls.

**"I'm a Guerrilla Girl."**

"There's a button announcing 'I'm a Guerrilla Girl' and the group suggests that every time you go into a gallery that ignores women's art, you sign the guest book *Guerrilla Girls*, to show we are ever vigilant. I wear my button and I sign the books, but I draw the line at calling myself a terrorist. It's become post-punk cute to be a terrorist; a couple of years ago the disco Danceteria invited everybody to be "cultural terrorists." The Reagan administration already calls us that, and it lets state terrorists off the hook to be coy about it.

On the other hand, there is an aspect of current artwork feminism that might be called Neo Aggressionism, epitomized by the Jenny Holzer "truism" text used on GG's Palladium poster, which reads, in part: "Don't talk down to me. Don't try to make me feel nice."

Concurrently with the GG extravaganza, Cindy Sherman (also at the Palladium) had a show at Metro Pictures that can be seen as part of this syndrome. A member of the third generation of feminist artists since the '60s, Sherman (born in 1954) has, like many of her colleagues, zeroed in on questions of gender and representation. These women are confronting authority problems that are more subtle than those that initially enraged their mothers. They both imitate and simultaneously interrupt the narrative and visual pleasure that the media serves up with its stereotypes of women as consumers and consumed.

You wouldn't know Sherman if you ran into her on the street, even if you'd seen dozens of her self-portraits. Woman of a thousand faces, she's the quickest change artist around. In the late '70s, she began faking black and white film stills from late '50s movies, aided by wigs, vintage costumes and shabbily Californian sets. Then she moved into her own space, with life-size color photo self-portraits. The backgrounds disappeared and the sometimes woozy focus became her own face, body, dress and dramatic pose.

Her entire physiognomy seems to change according to expression,

luridly colored lighting and costume. She becomes a battered woman, a satisfied lover, a challenger, a victim, a tease, a harri-dan. She is threatened and threatening, reflecting all the permutations of the false female simultaneously reflecting a young woman's authentic insecurities and search for independence. Though the work veers between pretty and gritty, Sherman rarely makes herself "beautiful" or even ingratiating.

**Erotic and aggressive**

In her latest show, the Sherman look-alikes are still distraught and disheveled, but they're not just waiting for another attack; they're lying in wait—powerful and potentially terrifying, archetypal females. Commissioned by *Vanity Fair* to illustrate children's fairy tales, they were understandably not printed. (Kids should be so lucky as to have these strong images to pervade their dreams, though Mummy might never look quite the same after such antidotes to Aunt Jemima and the Breck matron.)

Haunting, timelessly garbed or turbaned women look staring from behind tall grasses, grin fiendishly while displaying prosthetic breasts and rotting teeth, grub desperately in the earth, are perhaps dismembered, and definitely disfigured, with warts, scars, cuts and smears. One of Sherman's personae has a pig's snout, another is a witch—

*The Guerrilla Girls may be forging a link between the art world and feminist activism at the grassroots.*

perhaps humorous and beneficial, but not to be trifled with. The photographs are often shocking, erotic and aggressive.

Older feminists have questioned Sherman's ambiguities. I did, too, in the late '70s, but I've been won over. It still makes sense to ask of each work, is she critical or resigned? Passive or active? Is this consumerism internalized or exposed? Sherman usually sidesteps the heroicized view of Woman that was hoped for in the earlier days of the women's liberation movement. Her voyeuristic images can seem to victimize women. Yet they can also be seen as insight. The artist herself, not Big Daddy, is behind the camera. Like the conscious feminist, Sherman is both watcher and aware of being watched. Along with the advent of the Guerrilla Girls, her new work is a welcome reminder that feminism, too, comes in many guises.

**FLASH:** As *In These Times* goes to press, we receive word that the Berthe Marisot Brigade of the Guerrilla Girls takes responsibility for the confiscation from the Marmottan Museum in Paris of nine famous works of art—eight by men, "symbolic of the disproportionate representation in world museums."

## New feminist artists show they have a mean sense of humor

sense, black-on-white public service ads. One asked: "What do these artists have in common?" Below, 42 male artists were listed, from Fishl and Judd to Salle and Serra, then the answer: "They allow their work to be shown in galleries that show no more than 10 percent women artists, or none at all." The second poster listed the galleries, from Boone and Castelli to Marlborough and Pace (many of them, sadly, run by and named after women). The posters were signed "The Guerrilla Girls, a Women Artists Terrorist Organization."

This fall, another Guerrilla Girls (GG) poster turned up: "On October 17, the Palladium will apologize to Women Artists." The Palladium is the hottest new downtown club, housed in the vast, semi-deteriorating grandeur of an old theater on 14th Street, with permanent commissioned decor by five artists—all male. An invitation went out for a show that would "forever put to rest the following notions: 1) Biology is destiny; 2) There are no great women artists; 3) 'It's the men now who are emotional and intuitive'; 4) Only men can show at the Palladium." And on October 17, that show opened at the Palladium, a week-long exhibition by more than 80 women artists, sponsored by the Guerrilla Girls.

The Palladium is the Guggenheim of nightclubs. Art is hard put to compete with the noisy crowds, dark and overwhelming spaces, the combination of peeling paint and trendy remodeling. However, the theatrical lighting that might have trivialized the art instead enhanced it more than conventional gallery situations.

Mary Beth Edelson's great mythic Mother/Sister greeted en-

overhead; Alison Saar's *Jezebel Unbound* also towered over the average clubbie. And a small, granite, almost abstract double penis by Louise Bourgeois, in her 70s the doyenne of the movement, quietly but ferociously held its own in a hallway.

The company was illustrious too. Nancy Reagan (a.k.a. Redi

echoed by her enticing string stairwell installation. RAP performance artist Jerri Allyn did a 14-ironing-board takeoff on WRAP artist Christo (who just enveloped the Pont Neuf in Paris). Costumed appropriately, Diane Torr sold condom-wrapped data on female circumcision.

It remains to be seen what in-

Cindy Sherman, #152, *Untitled*, 1985, color photo





# From Cougar to Mellencamp

By Steve Perry

JOHN COUGAR MELLENCAMP is a good barometer of the connection between rock music and social action today. His latest album, *Scarecrow* (Riva/Polygram)—as artistically uneven as a record could be—charts the recent social upheavals of the rural Midwest. And it also charts Mellencamp's growth from Johnny Cougar into a maturing artist and (dare we say it?) social activist.

You remember the old Johnny Cougar: callow to the point of emotional brutality, apathetic going on misanthropic. Cougar was the archetypal snotty small-town kid. He called his second album *Nothin' Matters and What If It Did?*; his biggest single, "Jack & Diane," spat casually on young lives that had lost their direction. But even his contempt held no real emotional charge.

Yet sometime between 1982's *American Fool* and 1983's *Uh Huh*, Mellencamp's perspective started to change. He claimed his real surname and started attaching it to his work. And he started to view the people in his songs differently. It was most apparent in "Pink Houses," a series of vignettes about lives that start with dignity and aspirations and end in little pink tract houses. In place of cynicism, Mellencamp expressed anger at that kind of spiritual dislocation. In short, he started giving a damn.

On *Scarecrow*, Mellencamp continues the trek he started with *Uh Huh*. The results are uneven, but four songs ("Rain on the Scarecrow," "Minutes to Memories," "Lonely Ol' Night" and "Between a Laugh and a Tear") are among the best released anywhere this year.

Mellencamp won't let you miss the point here: the album jacket contains a note about the rolling farmland he grew up on, and the inner sleeve carries JCM's muse that "There is nothing more sad or glorious than generations changing hands." Got that? Fortunately, the blunt insistence of the album notes is nothing like the poignancy of these four songs.

Like so many contemporary rockers (Springsteen, Steve Van Zandt, Tom Petty, Neil Young, the Blasters, et al), Mellencamp is writing songs rooted in a sense of place, geographically and socially. The tragedy of modern American life for these artists is the sundering of those connections for whole classes of people. The family farmers on *Scarecrow* are being literally wiped off the map. The singer in "Rain on the Scarecrow" recounts a too-familiar tale of good crops, bad prices and impending foreclosure. The old man in "Minutes to Memories" reflects that he's "earned every dollar that passed through my hands." These are people who have lived by the rules all their lives, and in the end it just isn't enough.

Almost nine years after his first album was recorded, Mellencamp is just beginning to find his voice as a songwriter. A newfound compassion is the key. "Lonely Ol' Night" takes two standard-issue



Johnny Cougar characters—lovers who can't get it right but can't give it up—and gives them real feelings for the first time. In songs like "Hurts So Good," their highest motives were hormonal. Here they're

lonely and vulnerable as well, and that's territory Johnny Cougar wouldn't have been caught dead on.

Nuance, unfortunately, still isn't his forte. The songs evince a good deal of dignity and anger but can't

fathom the anguish that lies deeper in the hearts of America's disenfranchised: the isolation, doubt and self-inflicted guilt that keep them from realizing their common experience, and thus compound

## THEATER

### Dan White trial: you are the jury

By Patrice Clark Koelsch

PLAYWRIGHT AND DIRECTOR Emily Mann calls it "theater of testament." It is the Minneapolis Guthrie Theater's celebrated production of *The Execution of Justice*, a multi-media dramatization of the 1979 trial of ex-cop Dan White for the murders of San Francisco's liberal Mayor George Moscone and gay-activist Supervisor Harvey Milk.

Mann incorporates film excerpts, television news clips and simultaneous video broadcasts into the on-stage action. Arena staging and a cube of four large video screens suspended over a blood red square architecturally assigns the audience the ethically ambiguous role of spectator-participant. The drama begins on the video screens with an aerial tour of San Francisco (the city's air pollution is a palpable metaphor) and then segues to the familiar tape of Dianne Feinstein struggling to keep her composure while announcing the murders to the press. Feinstein's screen image is replaced by stills of stained glass while a distraught Dan White (played by John Spencer) recites the Act of Contrition beneath. Mary Ann White (Katherine Leask) joins him on stage. Embrace and fade out.

Next comes a confrontation between a reactionary cop (Robert

Bruer), whose porcine bulk is blatantly symbolic, and a flagrant black drag queen (Peter Francis-James) dressed as a nun and hissing revenge. The cop has a "Free Dan White" t-shirt under his police uniform; svelte Sister Boom Boom is wearing a red and black merry widow corset beneath the black and white habit. The underwear says it all, but it doesn't say enough.

*The Execution of Justice* offers provocative surfaces rather than political (or dramatic) analysis. While Mann claims that "our American values and legal systems are on trial here more than Dan White," there is no sustained attempt to articulate what those American values might be. Stereotypes and symbolic gestures keep the audience floating on the surface.

Consider the play's treatment of jury selection. Three potential jurors are briefly examined: defense lawyer Douglas Schmidt (Peter MacNichol) takes exception to a heterosexual woman who admits she once joined a friend at a gay rights rally, as well as a slender

young man who mentions he has a male roommate, while a conservative middle-aged man obviously sympathetic to White is not challenged by the prosecution. Why not? The dismissed jurors are hurt and puzzled—and so is the audience.

The deeper question of what it means to be tried by a jury of one's peers in an increasingly fragmented democracy is never raised. In a straightforward sense, White was tried by a jury of his peers, and it may have been their patriarchal, lower-middle-class indetermination with him that made his defense (the financial and emotional pressures, and the implicit political betrayal by Moscone) plausible.

While simultaneous video broadcasts of the on-stage action reinforce the intrusive superficiality of television reportage, the most successful dramatic strategy is the subtle way in which the prosecution and the defense become the persons they represent. Prosecutor Norman exemplifies the mildly cynical, practical politician; Schmidt becomes increasing-

*This hi-tech production of The Execution of Justice stages a show trial of the American legal system.*

IN THESE TIMES (NOV. 13-19, 1985) 21

their tragedy. On that score *Neb-aska* is still the strongest statement of the Reagan era.

You can't credit the album for its four great songs without acknowledging that it also contains three of the dumbest songs of this or any year ("Justice and Independence '85," "You've Got to Stand for Something" and "R.O.C.K. in the U.S.A."). In the first, these people called Justice and Independence have a child named Nation, see, but then they all go their separate ways and, gee whiz, it sure would be nice if they'd get together again. "You've Got to Stand for Something" calls up a series of banal, disjointed images in between sanctimonious warnings that "You've got to stand for something / Or you're gonna fall for anything." And so on. It's the sound of a marginal songwriter drunk on his own platitudes, and it isn't pretty.

The mere fact that a performer with Mellencamp's apathetic background feels compelled to make a stand says a lot about the extremity of the times. It says a lot, too, about Bruce Springsteen's influence. Beyond his immense impact on rock songwriting, Springsteen has become a role model for social action in the music community.

By extending the coverage of the flag to farmers, industrial workers and all the outclasses who aren't part of the "new" America taking shape in the '80s, artists like Springsteen, Mellencamp and Steve Van Zandt are finding a way to stand up for tradition and love of country without embracing political conservatism. Rock's new populism is one of the most encouraging developments on the American political scene.

Steve Perry is a rock critic for the *Minnesota Daily* newspaper.

ly agitated, admits he is nervous and nearly breaks down in his summation to the jury.

By limiting the dialog to court transcripts and remembered conversations, Mann cannot get beyond the self-serving facades of those who had a vested and visceral interest in the political resolution of the trial to the larger, more troubling issues. The convention of making the audience the jury isn't a serious effort (flashing the snide epithet "the Twinkie defense" on the video screens is a sure giveaway), and Minneapolis' affluent, theater-going gay community is the ideological antithesis of the actual jury that assessed White's guilt. There are never any surprises; the audience knows almost exactly how to pigeonhole each character as soon as he or she speaks. The complicated personalities of George Moscone and Harvey Milk are only suggested by clips from Robert Epstein and Richard Schmiechen's powerful *The Times of Harvey Milk*; perhaps Moscone and Milk were too complex for the rigid dichotomies that structure the play.

At the conclusion of *The Execution of Justice*, the indefatigable reporter (Lynn Chausow) explains that White was not required to undergo any therapy while in prison, that he was paroled after serving a term of less than six years, and that he planned to move to Ireland. Now she adds that White committed suicide by carbon monoxide poisoning on Oct. 21, 1985. Sister Boom Boom's threats of revenge have a chillingly hollow echo. Perhaps the pressure was just too much.

Patrice Clark Koelsch is a feminist critic in Minneapolis.



# Watchdogs

Continued from page 7

AIA board members provide additional access to government, pressure groups and trustees John Hemenway, 58, an AIM attorney and Georgetown Ph.D. candidate in Soviet affairs, is a retired foreign service officer. Fred Decker, 68, another board member and an emeritus professor of meteorology at Oregon State University, was deputy assistant secretary of Education from 1981 until he resigned in April.

And James Guirard, 49, is a Washington governmental affairs consultant whose recent clients include the United States Information Agency (USIA). He has undertaken a crusade against what he calls "semantic infiltration of the language." Guirard served in 1981 as national affairs director of the American Security Council Foundation, and for seven years before that as administrative assistant to Sen. Russell Long. Guirard's own proposals for "truth in labeling" the abuse of human rights by ultra-left governments have been taken up by the USIA, the National Security Council and the International Information Committee, a 30-member interagency committee with representatives from the State and Defense Departments, the CIA, USIA and National Security Council staff.

## Who's policing academe?

AIA's tactics, centralization and potential influence are key reasons why it is considered dangerous by those older faculty members who remember the scourge of McCarthyism on campus. Summoning up the political connotations of that scourge should not obfuscate issues of simple academic freedom: a professor's right to teach and publish without interference; the right to exercise the same civil and political rights as other citizens without endangering their economic status; and the collective right of the academic community to au-

tonomy. AIA stresses that students have a countervailing right to be taught fairly. Arguing that academe should police itself. But, as the AAUP has pointed out, it already does. Peer review, publishing and internal adversary proceedings are all designed to ensure that students and colleagues have a redress against abuse of academic freedoms.

In contrast, the AAUP's Ernst Benjamin argues, AIA's newsletter format gives professors no formal opportunity to confront their accusers. Students and auditors remain anonymous. That leaves professors nothing short of libel proceedings by which to challenge the accuracy of AIA newsletter quotes. And it is important to note that in Reader's case, Arizona state officials say they never received institutional complaints about the introductory politics professor.

Benjamin and other academics worry about the chilling effect that classroom monitoring will have on politically moderate and untenured professors. And there is a precedent: sociologists Lazarsfeld and Thielens in their 1958 study found that 85 percent of the 2,451 academics they surveyed in 1955 said they had toned down what they had written lately for fear of arousing too much controversy.

With AIA's choice of format, it is impossible not to attack individuals and their livelihood. AIA is attacking liberal ideas and liberals.

"The truth is there are no ultra-right professors," AIA attorney Hemenway argues. "There are defenders of traditional liberalism, 19th-century liberals." But he believes that on the left there are liberal professors who have been duped by Communists. "Abroad, the U.S. faces the danger from enemies who are sympathetic with radical left-wing movements, Marxists and Leninists who believe in making bombs and attracting attention to whatever their cause might be."

## Balancing act

Academe has always had a hard time balancing its concern with institutional autonomy

with the professor's right to teach. Unfortunately, its history of civil liberties is a bloody one as a result. From 1953-54, nearly 100 college teachers nationwide were hauled before commissions at university, state and national levels to testify about their political beliefs. Of those who refused to cooperate, most lost their jobs and reputations because of their associations, as the academic community itself made them professional outcasts. At Harvard, ex-Communists were expected to clear themselves with the FBI before being appointed. In California, universities checked candidates with the state legislature's Un-American Activities Committee.

In retrospect, it's obvious the academic community should have been more vigilant. Yet there is even greater cause for vigilance now. At least the McCarthyites used membership in or association with the Communist Party to gauge loyalty. The current wave of blacklisting creates criteria much more ambiguous (being a "Marxist"). Does "inaccurate" mean "advocating the overthrow of the U.S. government?" Or does it merely mean interpreting politics using left-wing economic analysis?

Still, that vigilance is not forthcoming. While the AAUP has waited for AIA's activities to get more and more bizarre, the targets, like Reader and David Barash—the tenured Washington State professor whose nuclear war course aroused the ire of the *Washington Spectator* staff—are taking the attacks in stride. Arizona State's President J. Russell Nelson told the *New York Times* on October 21 that he "was not going to pay attention" to AIA's recommendations, while Barash said after his public lambast in Seattle: "I received some congratulations from my colleagues. I said I'd rather have been in Nixon's enemies list."

Perhaps the best reason for the academic community to pursue its own assault against AIA is the group's assumption that college students on the whole are stupid and need others—whether professors or interest groups—to think for them. On the contrary, students today are exposed to myriad interest groups, political parties, speakers, journals and films on large campuses. To believe that they are so lazy as to be ignorant of a liberal conspiracy is to concede they are incapable of questioning the "status quo"—in education or anything else.

**Rosanna Perotti** is a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania and a former reporter with the *Trenton Times*.

# Battlefields

Continued from page 19

alone, which is to be found in all areas of the globe and its surrounding atmosphere, has become as militarily important as the arsenals of nuclear weapons. The C3I network has therefore become a vital target for disruption and/or destruction in the event of serious hostilities.

In the final chapter of *Nuclear Battlefields*, the authors point to some of the spreading world-wide opposition not just to nuclear weapons but to the nuclear

infrastructure that sustains them. The civil defense schemes of the nuclear nations have drawn much public derision and skepticism.

France is embroiled in a difficult controversy over its weapons testing in the Pacific. In much of Europe there has developed significant local opposition to the existence of nuclear bases, storage sites and related facilities. In Puerto Rico, U.S. military installations have been the targets of opposition forces for decades. In many American communities there has been strong and sometimes unexpected opposition to the creation of new nuclear facilities.

Arkin has since described this trend as a growing "nuclear allergy." It is not so much a unified anti-nuclear movement as it is people and governments reacting to the "toxic" effects of the penetration of the nuclear infrastructure into their communities and countries. Spreading this "allergic" reaction is a great deal of what *Nuclear Battlefields* is about.

Although the book is penetrating and to the point, it does not cater to the prescriptions of anyone's orthodoxy. It challenges people on all sides of the nuclear issue to examine their assumptions and come to terms with the realities of the nuclear system (at least as he sees them). Arkin's refusal to accept many of the presuppositions of either the peace movement or of the strategic elite has made him somewhat of an enigma to both camps.

## A lone voice?

I once saw Arkin participate in a roundtable discussion about the peace movement's goals and strategies. He interjected to challenge a bit of peace movement orthodoxy on the Soviet-American nuclear balance. He remarked that for years the majority of the peace movement has uncritically accepted analyses that purport to demonstrate American nuclear superiority—even though arguing that relative nuclear parity exists between the two superpowers—because it provides a sense of security to activists trying to convince themselves and others of their various proposals for disarmament.

He argued that the U.S. was *not* ahead in critical areas of the arms race, and proceeded to describe a nuclear scenario that gave the Soviets advantages in several important respects. He then asked the assembled peace leaders how the knowledge of American inferiority, though still at a level of overall parity with the Soviet nuclear forces, might affect their resolve to freeze the arms race and their arguments in support of peace and disarmament proposals.

As might be expected, this intervention thoroughly unsettled several of those assembled. Arkin was in fact denounced by one frenzied peace leader as the equivalent of an operative for the FBI.

Arkin similarly confounds the strategic and political elite. He frustrates the Pentagon by putting together obscure but public sources to deduce the functions and contents of top secret military bases and forces. He creates embarrassing international diplomatic problems for the U.S. as he travels to Canada, Japan and other countries to reveal supposedly top secret American plans to commandeer their nation's facilities in the event of certain national security contingencies.

Yet he draws grudging admiration from the military elite for publishing an account of its nuclear infrastructure that no one else, not even in the Pentagon, knows as well. And because of his meticulous research and documentation, elite policymakers can't dismiss him as uninformed or label him a soft-headed peacenik.

It is therefore important that peace and social justice activists not be put off by Arkin's unorthodox style, for he deserves a good hearing. In *Nuclear Battlefields* Arkin and Fieldhouse have exposed and described a worldwide military infrastructure that has proliferated far beyond any reasonable assessment of defense needs and that is encroaching on democratic process, on the sovereignty of nations and on the integrity of people.

**Jonathan F. Saxton** teaches sociology at Montgomery College in Maryland.

Illustration by Nicole Hollander



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# Trudeau

Continued from page 24

When Alice Schwartzman is hospitalized after nearly freezing to death, her first question to her nurse is, "Hi. Do you have any spare change?" Remember the idea of "tragedy repeated as farce," and reflect on the fact that Trudeau is not only a fine satirist, but also a superb storyteller, and in only four frames.

"Check your egos at the door" is the famous slogan that arranger Quincy Jones had posted at the entrance to the epochal U.S.A. for Africa *We Are the World* recording session. And, lest you think that Trudeau's tone has gone dark all the way, know that he treats that recording session with gentle wit and with obvious admiration for the charity behind its conception and execution. In fact, proceeds from the sale of *Check Your Egos* will go, as will proceeds from the

record's sales, to the U.S.A. for Africa Fund.

Why, in a strip where George Bush puts his manhood in a blind trust in order to run with Reagan, and where subway vigilantes can become media heroes, should our storyteller celebrate a gathering of pampered, probably drugged-out rock stars in a futile gesture of charity?

Because Trudeau, like all good political satirists, realizes that the ultimate solution to political problems is too important to be left to politicians. We have produced bureaucrats and sleek corporate assassins in more than sufficient numbers. In

Trudeau's world, the hope now lies in the rock and rollers, the bagladies, the bums and their first cousins, the ironic intellectuals, among whom the author of the strip is numbered. Hope lies in the absurd and essential chance of charity among the losers, and charity even toward the winners.

It's not a contemptible vision, having been held not only by most of the great political writers of the modern era, but also by certain itinerant preachers from hick towns like Galilee. That the vision should surface in a four-strip comic is no more surprising than that it should surface in the verbal comic strips of John Steinbeck or

IN THESE TIMES NOV. 13-19, 1985 23

the full-tilt boogie of Bruce Springsteen or the sublime rant of Allen Ginsberg.

The spirit, after all, bloweth where it listeth. It is nice to have someone like Trudeau around to remind us that it listeth to blow over park benches and jazz clubs and midnight conversations a hell of a lot more than over executive office buildings and GNP printouts.

Garry Trudeau helps rehumanize us. And if that is not a working definition of a serious artist, then I don't know what is. ■

*Frank McConnell is a professor of English at the University of California, Santa Cruz.*

## CALENDAR

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#### November 18

Reception for the Salvadoran cultural group, Cutumay Camones. In the Spirit of "Nueva Cancion" or the New Song Movement, the five members of Cutumay Camones bring the rich musical heritage of Latin America alive. Using traditional folkloric string and percussion instruments (bombo, marimba, violon, tumbador, guitarron, accordion and guitar),

Cutumay Camones creates a music born in struggle. At Envoy Towers, 2400 16th, NW, Washington, DC 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. \$10.00 donation. For reservations call (202) 797-9128. Sponsored by Casa El Salvador and Paredon Records.

#### November 20

The Second Annual Karen Silkwood Awards will be presented following the last performance of "Silkwood," starring Jehane Dyllan at the Sheraton Washington Ballroom in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association. Tickets \$10 advance, \$12 at door. Sponsored by the Christic Institute. For information call 797-8106.

### NEW YORK, N.Y.

#### November 16

Join the Salvadoran group Cutumay Camones in concert with Johnny Colon and his orchestra. Cutumay Camones brings the New Song Movement to the U.S. First time any Salvadoran cultural group has performed in the U.S. Cutumay Camones creates a music born in struggle, and drawn from the traditions of the Salvadoran people. At: P.S.41, 106 W. 11th St. (11th St. and 2nd Ave., between 6th and 7th Avenues) 7:30 p.m. Events also at Columbia Nov. 20th and Hunter Col-

lege, Nov. 21st. For more information call (212) 926-5825. Sponsored by Casa El Salvador and Paredon Records.

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#### November 23

Cutumay Camones in concert. In the spirit of "Nueva Cancion" or the New Song Movement, the five members of Cutumay Camones bring the rich musical heritage of Latin America alive. Using traditional folkloric string and percussion instruments (bombo, marimba, violon, tumbador, guitarron, accordion and guitar), Cutumay Camones creates a music born in struggle. Peoples Church, 941 West Lawrence, Chicago, 7:00 p.m. \$10.00 donation. Call (312) 489-3567 for tickets and information. Tickets available at Guild Bookstore, Europa Bookstore and Modern Bookstore. Sponsored by Casa El Salvador and Paredon Records.

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# ZONKER

**R**EADY? THIS IS ANOTHER INSTANT test-your-awareness-of-contemporary-culture quiz: one question and no fudge points for effort. What do Ronald Reagan, Bernard Goetz, Baby Fay, Barney Clark, Stevie Wonder, Prince, Cyndi Lauper and Bob Greene all have in common besides being inhabitants of the present century?

Of course they are all mammals, but we are not dealing in trivialities here. No: while all mammals exist, presumably, in the mind of God, the characters I have named also exist, by direct reference or allusion or sly innuendo (is there such a thing as "frank innuendo"?), in the mind of G.B. Trudeau and the alternate universe referred to as *Doonesbury*. It is a distinction that isn't necessarily an honor.

*Check Your Egos at the Door* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1985; 128 pp., \$5.95) is a brilliant selection of Garry Trudeau's work since his return from his celebrated 18-month hiatus, and a further indication that this may, indeed, be the Golden Age of the comic strip in America. It is also a justification of the fact that the Louisville *Times*, for one, runs *Doonesbury* on the editorial rather than the comics page. For Trudeau has taken the art or the craft or the weapon of the comic strip past almost any

previous boundaries of subtlety and turned it into a medium of satire we cannot call less than Swiftian.

All the old gang is back, the *commedia del'arte* road show of Trudeau's world-vision. There is Mike Doonesbury, once an earnest Yalie, now a bemused yuppie. There is Uncle Duke, perennially in search of the lasting high and the perfect scam. And there is Zonker, the one big chill child who on principle refuses to grow up. And all the others.

But they have changed. (Haven't we all?) Mike has graduated from undergraduate wusshood to advertising executive and his first big job is to find a way to sell Reagan to blacks. Uncle Duke, at wit's end, has founded the Baby Doc School of Medicine on Haiti where he attempts to transplant the heart of a liberal into the brain of a conservative in a sequence only Graham Greene could have equalled.

Zonker's purposeful and protracted adolescence has phased from innocence to infantilism, until he is now in danger of becoming the seediest Peter Pan in the Western world. Even Alice Schwartzman, the picturesque derelict and baglady from the earlier strip, has come close to freezing to death on a park bench directly across from the White House—in what has to be one of the grimmest comic strips I have

ever seen.

Comic strip? What's comic about racism, dictatorship and poverty across the street from the nation's capitol? Is this supposed to make you laugh like *Nancy* or *Blondie*?

No. It's supposed to make you laugh like Swift's *A Modest Proposal*, like Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, like Dostoyevsky's *Notes from Underground*, like Zamyatin's *We*, or like any of a hundred satires that remind us that politics—the way people manage to live together and not kill one another—is too serious not to be taken as a joke.

## Habitable history

Karl Marx said every event in history occurs twice: once as tragedy and then as farce. I would revise Marx to the extent of insisting that the farcical repetition is the one that really matters. An event, as any quantum theorist worth his salt will tell you, is innately unknowable. But the joke, the story, the tall tale we tell about the event after it happens is what makes it make sense—literally, what makes history habitable.

And as a political/cultural commentator, Trudeau is much closer to the humane tradition of Thomas Pynchon and Lenny Bruce than he is to the superannuated-boy-scout cutenesses of a George Will or the arid pontifications of someone like the *New York Times'* Tom Wicker.

Not that the "new" *Doonesbury* is as immediately funny as the "old" *Doonesbury*. The whimsy, the rim-shot sense of punch-line timing, even, yes, the good nature that characterized the strip before Trudeau's retreat, and that were largely responsible for its wide appeal are mostly gone.

Case in point: the "old" Trudeau could make great, bitchy fun out of Elizabeth Taylor's absurd sojourn in Washington as the wife of Sen. John Warner. But the "new" Trudeau makes great, *savage* humor out of the counterpoint between Frank Sinatra's alleged underworld connections and the president's flaccid testimonials to him as a "great humanitarian." The Sinatra strips do not appear in *Check Your Egos* and may never appear. Most newspapers, out of legal pusillanimity, refused to run them. But the same spirit informs most of the sequence in this book—the spirit of savage indignation.

*Saeva indignatio* was the phrase Swift caused to be inscribed on his gravestone. And the transition from the old to the new *Doonesbury* is rather like the transition from the first to the fourth book of *Gulliver's Travels*: the tone darkens, the jokes begin to take on a sharp, sometimes even jagged edge, and as often as not seem not to be jokes at all, until a second reading.

*Continued on page 23*